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MY LADY *Suffolk*

Catherine, Duchess of Suffolk

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MY LADY *Suffolk*

A PORTRAIT OF
Catherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk

BY

EVELYN READ

Alfred A. Knopf · New York

1963

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THIS IS A BORZOI BOOK

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For CON

PREFACE

CATHERINE WILLOUGHBY, Duchess of Suffolk, was born a Catholic and became a convinced and zealous Puritan; she was born to a sheltered and secure life and, by her own honesty and outspokenness, she courted persecution and lived in danger. She was a woman of wit and beauty and charm, and of great integrity. Her life would not be regarded as important in the development of the politics and affairs of England, but at least one great statesman cherished her friendship, and many whose thinking and writing and preaching were basic to the Protestant Reformation owed much to her generosity and religious zeal and to the stimulus of her eager mind.

This book is not a formal biography. Rather it is an attempt to make a very vital sixteenth-century woman come to life in the twentieth century; and if, now and again, I seem to have attributed to Catherine of Suffolk thoughts or feelings which cannot be documented, it is because my study of all the material bearing on her life leads me to the belief that they are valid. I have made, I think, no statement of fact that I cannot support. Today, when differing forms of worship are not only tolerated but taken for granted, it is not entirely easy for us to credit the attitudes regarding religion which prevailed among civilized peoples four hundred years ago, or to believe that a woman like Catherine Willoughby could feel as strongly as she did and could be persecuted simply because she insisted upon worshipping her God according to the dictates of her own conscience. But if we substitute

political or economic beliefs for religious beliefs, we can perhaps more nearly understand the thinking and the actions of those who fervently believed that change was not only inevitable but desirable.

Catherine Willoughby was married twice, to two men who were quite different from one another: the first a peer of the realm, a soldier and courtier and the favourite of his king; the second a quiet, scholarly man, of more humble birth though still a gentleman and, like herself, a zealous Puritan. She seems to have been happy in both of her marriages, and she felt so strongly about the estate of matrimony that she declined to participate, for her children, in the sixteenth-century custom of arranging marriages with no reference to love between the young people. In an age when women were expected to be seen and not heard, Catherine was seen for her beauty and heard for her intelligence and wit, her spiritual integrity and zeal. What she believed in she stood up for and worked for, but she would accept nothing simply because it was the custom. She was born twenty years after the beginning of the sixteenth century and died twenty years before its end, but she might have lived successfully and effectively in the twentieth century. She was a modern woman.

This story of Catherine has been written for my husband, Conyers Read, who opened for me the door to the enchantment of the sixteenth century and the fascination of research. Working with him through the years was not only a complete joy, it was also an illuminating and stimulating experience. At various times he urged me to write this book. For his sake I wish it were better than it is. Whatever is good in it belongs to him; its weaknesses are my own.

The list of those to whom I am indebted for help and

encouragement is long. I am extremely grateful to Sir John Neale, for his encouragement, for his replies to my many letters – no question that I asked him was too slight for him to answer in detail – and for the helpful talks we had in his home after he had read the typescript. I hold him in no way responsible for faults, but I acknowledge his generous help with deep gratitude. I thank Mr Noel Blakiston of the Public Record Office and Mr John McKenzie of the British Museum, who sent me microfilms of documents with great promptness whenever I asked for them, so that I was able to work from source material even before I could get to England; when I did get to London, the staffs of both the Museum and the Record Office gave me the same courteous and helpful treatment to which I had become accustomed in the years when I worked there with my husband. Mr Piper and Mr Kerslake, of the National Portrait Gallery, were very helpful in finding the portraits of the Duke of Suffolk and of Richard Bertie; I acknowledge their help with thanks. I am grateful to the Rev. Canon James L. Cartwright, archivist of Peterborough Cathedral, who looked up for me, at a very busy time in his own life, the facts about the burial of Catherine of Suffolk's mother; and to Dr Louis B. Wright and the members of his staff at the Folger Shakespeare Library, who gave me co-operation and helpful suggestions. I have borrowed great numbers of books from the libraries of Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, and I am grateful not only for the books but also for the librarians' patience when I kept them far over my allotted time.

Miss Doris Coates, of the National Archives Register, and Mrs Joan Varley, Mr Michael Lloyd and Mrs Owen of the Lincolnshire Archives were all most helpful. I am very grateful to Pastor Boeddinghaus of St Willebrod's Church

in Wesel, for showing me through his church, which was closed for repairs, for driving me to Santon and for information about the Walloons; Professor Freysin of Weinheim was also helpful. Professor Allan G. Chester of the University of Pennsylvania was always ready to talk with me about Hugh Latimer and the New Religion; I learned much from him and am grateful for his help.

My good friend, Lady Le Maitre, who lives in Suffolk, sent me information about the county and spent a week-end driving me all about it, to Parham and Westhorpe and Ufford Church; her help was invaluable. And I am very grateful to the Earl of Ancaster, Catherine of Suffolk's descendant, and to Lady Ancaster; they invited me, a total stranger, to stay with them at Grimsthorpe and gave me the room which, as far as they could be certain, was the room the duchess had occupied. They showed me everything I asked to see and more, and Lord Ancaster got out of safe deposit for me to see and gave me permission to reproduce, the miniature of Catherine which is the frontispiece of this book.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my children, Polly, Liza, Ned and Bunk, who have encouraged me at every turn, and to my mother who has borne cheerfully with my moods of alternate elation and gloom as I have worked on this book.

E. R.

Villa Nova, Pennsylvania
1961

CONTENTS

	PROLOGUE	15
I	BEGINNINGS	21
II	HENRY'S ENGLAND	33
III	THE NEW RELIGION	50
IV	EDWARD VI, WILLIAM CECIL AND SOMERSET	64
V	'NOT FOR THE LEAST OF HIS BENEFITS'	79
VI	THE STORM BREAKS	97
VII	EXILE	110
VIII	HOME PROBLEMS	130
IX	GRIMSTHORPE	147
X	SUSAN AND PEREGRINE, AND RICHARD BERTIE	167
XI	ENDINGS	193
	NOTES	197
	INDEX	201

ILLUSTRATIONS

CATHERINE, DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK *frontispiece*
From a miniature, after Holbein, at Grimsthorpe
(Reproduced by permission of the Earl of Ancaster)

CHARLES BRANDON, DUKE OF SUFFOLK *facing page* 48
From the original by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery

CATHERINE OF SUFFOLK TO WILLIAM CECIL 88
First page of a letter, dated June 1552, in Catherine's hand, from the original at the Public Record Office

RICHARD BERTIE, ESQUIRE 168
Artist unknown
(*Art Trade*, 1935; present location unknown)

A VIEW OF LONDON ABOUT THE YEAR 1560 *endpapers*
(Crace Collection, British Museum)

MY LADY *Suffolk*

PROLOGUE

THE sun over the county of Suffolk rises out of the North Sea, covering the rolling fields with a rosy mantle. On an early autumn morning the ripe fruits, blackberries nestling luscious and purple among their green leaves, cheerful red apples and plums hanging like round, perfect garnets from branches bending low with their succulent weight, all begin to glow, like coals in the heart of a fire. The woodlands – tall oak and graceful elm – gradually turn green, a shimmering deep emerald reflecting the dancing light from the newly awakened sea, miles off to the east, and here and there the silver shaft of a birch emphasizes the blackness of the other trunks. A horse stamps and whinnies, and another, a mile or so away, answers; and an early-rising peasant in brown jerkin and leather hose comes out of a thatched cottage whose smoke rises like a grey plume against the morning sky. He trudges along the narrow lane between the hedgerows, a road which was black and deserted an hour before. The little fish in the small rivers which criss-cross the county come up to the surface, looking for a chance insect to devour; their noses break the quiet water, causing ripples to spread in jewelled circles, returning the amethyst rays of the early morning sun with flashes of topaz and diamond; while the willows on either bank droop their delicate branches to caress the water with soft green finger-tips. The world is mysterious, tentative, magic. And suddenly it is day, the mystery is over and revealing light has

come. The silence is broken by the steady humming undertone of man and beast setting forth about their daily tasks, the creak of carts, the muted jangle of metal against leather as horses are harnessed and men go to their work in the fields. The sky that was rosy with the dawn is a clear blue, with fluffy white clouds racing across it from the haze of the eastern horizon.

On such a morning in September of 1533, a girl of about fifteen pushed open the leaded casement of her bedroom and stood watching the Suffolk world come to life. The fields that had been softly rippling a month before were a brown-gold stubble left behind by the harvesters who had cut the ripe grain. In the gardens below the open window, herbs – thyme, lavender and rosemary – made a fragrant grey-green sea on either side of paths bordered by low box, with here and there the mustard yellow of yarrow, the dusty purple of Michaelmas daisies. The odours from all of these, the spicy tang of the herbs, the heavy bitter-sweetness of the yarrow and the elusive fragrance of the asters, blended together in a bouquet that rose gently on the morning air to caress the face at the open casement.

The girl who gazed out into the morning, breathing deeply of the sweet-scented air, was beautiful, slight and erect. Her thoughtful eyes were set wide apart below a smooth brow in a heart-shaped face. The nose was finely chiselled and straight, and the sensitive mouth above an almost stubborn little chin was barely parted as she stood there looking and thinking. Her brown hair fell over slender shoulders as she drew her furred robe more closely about her. The dawn was chill, but by noon it would be warm on this sunny, late-summer day.

She knew and loved every detail of the scene below her

window, knew it by heart from five happy years spent in this great house where she had come as a child to live as the ward of the duke, master of the house and of the gardens and fields and woods as far away as she could see. Every bit of it was dear to her, the spacious fields and the intimate gardens, the winding streams with the little fish darting about in the clear water, the brown roads and the prickly hedges. She loved the heady fragrance of bean blossoms in the early summer, and the bright flash of scarlet poppies nodding their heads in the fields; the gold of the wheat at harvest time, and the dark, silent, sleeping countryside in the winter, now and then covered by a thin blanket of snow, when all the fields would be clean and white and the roads black and deep in mud. All this she loved; and she loved most dearly the people who lived in the house, who had made her, Catherine Willoughby, very young and newly bereft of her father when she came there, so very welcome.

The house was the manor house of Westhorpe, the country home of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, hearty, bluff and very much alive; gay and charming as he moved about his house and lands, irresistible in steel armour as he rode his horse in tournaments, balancing his spear lightly in his right hand while his left held so gently the rein that controlled his magnificent stallion. Charles Brandon was the favourite of his king, the handsome and popular Henry VIII; he was the beloved husband of Mary Tudor, King Henry's beautiful younger sister who had married him, her girlhood love, soon after the not unwelcome death of her first husband, King Louis XII of France; and he was a devoted father to their children, their daughters Frances and Eleanor, their son, Lord Charles, and to little Catherine Willoughby, his ward since 1528, two years after the death of her own father.

On this September morning as she watched the sunrise, Catherine Willoughby had a strange feeling, almost of breathlessness, as she leaned her head against the side of the window. So much had changed so quickly; and today there would be, for her, the greatest change of all. Barely three short months ago her elder foster-sister, Frances Brandon, had gone to London to be married to the young Earl of Dorset. The weeks before the wedding had been full of excitement in the usually placid household, excitement and preparation. And then her beloved foster-mother, the beautiful, gentle Mary Tudor, had come back home from the wedding, pale and so weak that she was scarcely able to get to her room. The French Queen, as she was always called, was very ill; and Catherine and little Eleanor Brandon tiptoed about the halls that had once echoed to their skipping footsteps, like small, frightened ghosts, not knowing what was happening behind the oak door, the door that had always been open to them but was now tightly closed. In June, when the scent of blossoms was sweet in the air, the lovely lady who had brought such happiness into little Catherine Willoughby's life, died. She lay on a bier in the chapel of the manor house, where Catherine, as well as her own two daughters, crept in to kneel and pray each morning and each evening. And then there had been the long procession through the rough, winding roads to Bury St Edmunds, fifteen slow miles away. Catherine and her own mother, among the chief mourners, had ridden in the sad procession immediately behind the French Queen's own two daughters, who had followed their mother's body on horses covered with black saddle-cloths which fell to the ground in dark folds. As the solemn cortège passed through each village along the way, groups of villagers met it, carrying torches.

Finally the Abbey church was reached: the same Norman church with its sturdy columns and rounded arches where, four hundred years before, the barons under Archbishop Langton had drawn up the petition which was the basis for Magna Carta. There requiem mass was said, the offerings of palls of cloth of gold were made by the lady mourners, and the long funeral sermon was preached by the Abbot of St Benet. And the body of the French Queen, wife of Catherine's guardian, the loving lady who had brought love and security to the little ward, had been buried in the church near the High Altar.

The members of the funeral procession returned home to Westhorpe, to a house that seemed strangely empty and bereft without its beloved mistress.

The French Queen's funeral had taken place on July 21st. And now it was early September, six weeks later, as Catherine Willoughby watched the sunrise and thought her thoughts. Later that day, she would stand beside the duke, the forty-eight-year-old man, handsome and vigorous in his middle age, whose ward she had been, and she would say the words that would make her his wife. Catherine, Duchess of Suffolk (she breathed the words to herself as she stood at the window), at such a young age she would be the second peeress in the kingdom after the ladies of the royal blood, mistress of this house and of all she could see from her open casement.

Small wonder if the prospect was almost frightening to the young girl. In a few short hours she would leave childhood and become a woman; only a little time now, and the man who had been as a father to her would be her husband; still to be obeyed, to be sure, still her lord and master, but yet quite different. Unlike the lot of many young girls of her age in this sixteenth century, however, the man she

would stand beside would be no stranger but one she knew and trusted and loved, one who had cared for her, in whose house she had grown up happy and confident. He was a little formidable, this handsome, gay and dashing duke, but kind too, and gentle. And so she was not really afraid. But now it would be she, Catherine, who would be at his side when he went up to the Court in Westminster, at the king's command. How to carry herself, deportment in all situations, was one of the lessons the French Queen had taught her. Would she remember all she had learned? Would she measure up when she appeared before all the Court as the Duchess of Suffolk, the wife chosen by the king's brother-in-law – his favourite – her talented, brave and spirited husband?

Catherine Willoughby's little chin set itself more firmly. Her dark eyes, thoughtful still, had a determined gleam in their depths, as she turned from the window to the waiting maids who had come to dress her for her wedding.

I

BEGINNINGS

CATHERINE WILLOUGHBY was born in March of 1519 or 1520. Parham Old Hall, the house in which she was born, was in eastern Suffolk, near the little town of Framlingham where the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk stood – the magnificent Norman fortress-castle with its broad moat and high stone towers, its windows, long and narrow, for bowmen. Parham Old Hall was a moated house, too, and its moat washed the base of rosy brick walls, catching the glancing rays of the Suffolk sun and tossing them back to make patterns of shimmering light and shadow on leaded windows and high chimneys.

Parham Old Hall had belonged to the Willoughby family since the days of Edward II, and William Lord Willoughby brought his Spanish bride, Maria de Salinas, home there in 1516 after their marriage in Greenwich. Lord Willoughby, soldier and courtier, had fought for Henry VIII in his early campaigns in France. His bride was the favourite lady-in-waiting to Henry's wife, Queen Catherine of Aragon, and her devotion to her royal mistress was the dominating force in her life until the day, more than twenty years later, when the unhappy queen, outcast and divorced, died in her arms.

At the time of Lord Willoughby's marriage to the queen's lady-in-waiting, Henry looked with favour on matches between his own subjects and those of his wife's native Spain. This was markedly so in the case of the Willoughbys,

the stalwart soldier, as English as the English oaks, and his little dark-eyed Spanish bride. The king gave handsome proof of his pleasure in this particular wedding by a large grant of lands in Lincolnshire, including the reversion of the manor of Grimsthorpe, occupied by the Dowager Countess of Oxford, to come upon her death to Lord Willoughby and his wife Maria. Henry also paid the new Lady Willoughby the signal compliment of naming one of his new ships after her, the *Mary Willoughby*. The atmosphere was altogether felicitous for Lord Willoughby and his young wife; wealth, position, their sovereign's favour – all were theirs as they started their married life. And all were theirs that March day when their baby girl was born, and was christened by the name of Catherine, the queen's name. The little Norman church in Ufford, close by Parham, was largely built by Catherine Willoughby's ancestors, and she is said to have been baptized there at the beautiful fifteenth-century font, carved with roses and with the shields of Willoughby and of Ufford. The magnificent tabernacle cover of the font rises eighteen feet in intricately carved, receding tiers of canopied niches, exquisitely painted and gilded, to where, at the top, stands a gilded pelican, medieval symbol for Christ.

The England into which Catherine Willoughby was born was Catholic England, loyal to the Pope and to the bluff, hearty king, Henry VIII, and his wife, the Spanish princess of Aragon. Little Catherine Willoughby, baptized in the Catholic faith, was confirmed in the same faith, as were all English children in those days. Stephen Gardiner, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, was Catherine's godfather; thirty years later, in the reign of Henry's daughter Mary, when Gardiner was at the height of his power as the queen's Lord Chancellor, he spoke of the time when he was Catherine's

'gossip' and she was 'as earnest as any' in the Roman faith. That later day was quite a different time in England, and Gardiner was then trying to trap Catherine and imprison her for heresy. But in 1520, England gave little outward sign of the storm that was in the offing, a storm whose winds would sweep over her, tearing her from the Roman Church and setting in motion forces, religious and secular, undreamt of by most Englishmen in the year of Catherine Willoughby's birth.

In 1520 the king and queen had one daughter, Mary, four years older than Catherine Willoughby, and they were still hoping for a son to inherit the crown of England. Relations with Spain and with the Pope were warm and harmonious at that time. Henry's Lord Chancellor, Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, resplendent in his crimson robes, secure in his position of influence, was, next to the king himself, all-powerful. If there were mutterings of discontent among the nobles or the bourgeoisie because of Wolsey's overbearing manner, his arrogance and his power, they were as yet only mutterings. Wolsey was a cardinal of the Roman Church; certainly there was little if any doubt voiced by most Englishmen that the only true Church was the Church of Rome, the only true faith the Roman faith. It was not until much later, after Henry had broken from Rome and established his own Church, free from allegiance to pope or cardinal, that Englishmen openly questioned the rightness of the Roman position or the position of a cardinal of the Church of Rome. It was still later that some free spirits found even Henry's English Church too formal, too papistical in its liturgy and vestments, its veneration of saints and belief in purgatory, and turned to the simpler forms of worship, influenced by Continental thinkers and preachers, thus starting what would

become the Puritan movement in England. Catherine Willoughby was one of these free spirits. But in her childhood she was a Roman Catholic.

Most of Catherine's early childhood was spent at Parham Old Hall. She was a solitary little girl, trotting through the halls, looking up at the knights in armour, the animals – hounds and horses – woven into the tapestries that hung on the walls of the great gallery, or playing in the gardens under the tall trees, watching the shadows on the water of the moat. Her parents were away much of the time: her father campaigning for his king or serving him at Court, her mother waiting upon Queen Catherine. Her mother, in fact, was one of the select group for whom a room was provided at Court, for her to stay at the palace near the queen. And so little Catherine knew hardly anything of family life, of the uninterrupted devotion of a loving mother, the day-to-day association with a gay, handsome father. She was alone, except for loyal servants. She saw the seasons change, smelled the fragrance of the blossom as blackberry and hawthorn came into white flower in the late spring, felt the warm sun of Suffolk in July and August, the chill air and the tangy breezes blowing from the sea, only twenty miles away, in the winter.

Catherine's father died on October 19th, 1526, and the little girl became the Baroness Willoughby, heiress to her father's fortune[1] and to such lands as did not, by entailment, have to pass to male heirs. In this case the male heir was her father's brother, Sir Christopher Willoughby, who tried to make trouble over Catherine's inheritance, accusing her mother of such misdemeanours as keeping the news of his brother's illness and death from him, destroying evidence and even taking from the house articles of value which by

right belonged to him. Finally the differences were straightened out, and though there was never any affection between Lord Willoughby's widow and daughter and his brother, neither was there active enmity.

Upon her father's death, Catherine Willoughby became a ward of the Crown. In the sixteenth century, among the nobility and wealthier gentry, when a father died, his child, if a minor, became a royal ward. The Crown had jurisdiction over this child and his (or her) moneys and estates, from which the Crown, of course, derived revenues. In most cases the wardship was sold by the Crown, acting through the Court of Wards; in the case of a ward such as Catherine Willoughby, who was heir to a large fortune, the wardship was sold to someone of wealth and position, who paid handsomely for it, for the opportunity to make considerable money from the administration of the ward's affairs. In March of 1529, the wardship of Catherine Willoughby was bought by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, for £2,666 13s. 4d., a very substantial sum of money.[2]

Charles Brandon was said to be the only man Henry VIII ever really loved. His father was William Brandon, standard-bearer for Henry VII at the Battle of Bosworth Field, where Richard III himself killed him. Charles was therefore born no later than 1485 – the year of Bosworth. From the very start of Henry VIII's reign, he was a great favourite with the king. He was not unlike Henry physically, tall, sturdy, valiant. He loved outdoor sports, particularly jousting, at which he excelled, a sport in which Henry, too, was proficient. In the first year of Henry's reign, Charles Brandon was a squire of the royal body, and from then on he proceeded from one position to another, higher one, in the king's service. In 1514, five years after Henry's accession, he was

created Duke of Suffolk, which raised him in rank to a position second only to that of the Duke of Norfolk, the first peer of the realm.

At the time of Suffolk's purchase of the wardship of little Catherine Willoughby, he was married to Henry's younger sister, Mary Tudor. She was his third wife. Suffolk's life, before he married Mary, had been colourful, to put it mildly. He had been betrothed and unbetrothed, married and unmarried. But none of his adventures had cost him the affection or confidence of his sovereign. Probably his marriage to Mary came closer to doing that than anything he ever did. Mary had married, in 1514, King Louis XII of France. It was, of course, a marriage made for political reasons. Mary was eighteen, charming and beautiful, and, most important, the sister of the King of England; Louis was a tired, worn-out fifty-two, neither handsome nor alluring. But he was the King of France. In persuading his sister to agree to the match, Henry had promised her that if the French king should die, she should have her own choice in a second marriage. And so she married Louis and was crowned Queen of France; and she was known as the French Queen until the day of her death. Henry's emissary to her coronation was the Duke of Suffolk, who witnessed the ceremonies and covered himself, and England, with glory in the jousts and pageantry held in honour of the event. The marriage was of short duration – Louis died the following January 1st. And Suffolk, only just returned to England from Mary's coronation, was sent back to France as Henry's ambassador to Francis I, the new king.

Francis had lost no time in pressing his attentions upon the widowed queen, who did her best to repel his overtures. Finally she confessed to him her love for the Duke of

Suffolk. But she was fearful that her brother, thinking only of the political usefulness of her marriage, would forget his promise to allow her to choose her own husband. Furthermore, she was well aware that most of Henry's council, already jealous of Suffolk's hold on the king's affection, would do all in their power to prevent his marriage to her, the king's sister. So she persuaded Suffolk to marry her before Henry could once more select a bridegroom for her, and they were wed secretly, in Paris, early in 1515.

Henry was outraged at their presumption, and many of the council, particularly those of the old nobility, would have had Suffolk's head. As Mary knew, they regarded him as an upstart, and their jealousy of his position made them seize upon any pretext to discredit him in the king's eyes. But they did not succeed. In the end, Henry relented, satisfied by the gift of Mary's plate and jewels and a bond of £24,000 to repay, in yearly instalments, the expenses he had incurred in connection with her marriage to Louis. Actually, in his secret heart Henry probably sympathized with his sister and Suffolk, and found it hard to condemn her marriage to this man whom he loved. Impulsive himself, he must have understood their impulsiveness. And so they came back to England in April, and on May 13th they were married, in a second ceremony, in the presence of the king at Greenwich.

They went to live in the country quietly at first, until the displeasure of the nobles had somewhat blown over; but gradually they took more and more part in Court life, as King Henry wished them to do. In 1520, they accompanied Henry and his queen across the Channel to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, where the fine quarters allotted to them were immediately next to those of Henry and Catherine of Aragon. But for the most part, whatever official duties

Suffolk had to perform for his sovereign, the French Queen preferred to live quietly at home. She was a very lovely young woman with a stately grace, an ornament to any Court ceremonial. But she was also rather a frail woman, and found the peaceful life in her home at Westhorpe far pleasanter than the hectic existence that was Court life. She loved her gardens, and spent long and happy hours planning them and supervising the work of her gardeners. And she took great care of the running of her large establishment. Mary was a kind and gentle person, the sort of woman who would have taken a personal interest in the welfare of the members of her household, who would have commanded the very real devotion of everyone who knew her, from her own husband and children down to the least scullery maid. And as often as he could be away from the king's service, Suffolk was at home with her. It was a warm, happy life, the life of two people who were in love and whose greatest happiness came from each other and from their children and their home.

This was the home and the atmosphere into which little Catherine Willoughby moved in 1528. The countryside was not strange to her. Westhorpe was only about twenty-five miles to the north-west of Parham, farther from the sea, so that the breezes blowing across the fields and through the woods were drier and without the salt smell of those that blew over Parham. But from the rich earth the tall oaks reached up into the sky almost farther than a little girl could see as she stood on the ground, her head tipped back, looking upward. Gorse had grown around Parham, in cheerful stretches of bright yellow. About Westhorpe the acres of golden grain, wheat and oats and barley, waved in the wind, green in the early summer, turning to gold as the year grew

older. They stretched as far as the eye could see, broken by blackberries and hawthorns, the clumps of woodland and the willows by the streams.

There were two other little girls at Westhorpe, Frances and Eleanor Brandon, the two daughters of the duke and the French Queen. Frances was three years older than Catherine, Eleanor about her age. Together they played under the trees or walked in the fragrant herb garden. They learned to distinguish between the different herbs, and the uses, medicinal or culinary, of each one; they watched the French Queen supervising her household servants and her gardeners, and saw how a great lady treated those who were serving her, and how a household should be run. This was part of the education of a young girl. Giovanni Bruto, one of the sixteenth-century writers on the subject of educating young women, said that a girl

> shall learn not only all manner of fine needlework ... but whatsoever belongeth to the distaff, spindle and weaving, which must not be thought unfit for the honour and estate wherein she was born ... and which is more, to the end that becoming a mistress she shall look into the duties and offices of domestical servants, and see how they sweep and make clean the chambers, hall and other places, make ready dinner, dressing up the cellar and buttery, and that she be not proud that she should disdain to be present ... at all household works.

Such training, under the kindly and gentle hand of the French Queen, stood Catherine Willoughby in good stead all through her life, when she had to manage her own large household and did so with ease and grace.

The little girls had their lessons at Westhorpe, too. It is not

clear how much formal education Catherine Willoughby ever had. She was not a learned woman, never a 'blue-stocking' in the way in which the brilliant Cooke sisters were. She was intelligent, however, and eager. Reading and writing she learned, of course, and she may have had some little Latin and Greek. Undoubtedly she learned some music, probably how to play on a musical instrument. Music played no real part in Catherine's later life, but practically all the daughters of the gentry learned how to play, and Catherine was probably no exception. Deportment was an important part of her education, a lesson which she learned not only from precept but also from being constantly influenced by the actions and ways of the charming and cultivated mistress of the house in which she lived. Good manners, too, were stressed as an important part of the education of a girl-child in the sixteenth century, and Catherine learned that lesson well. How much she had learned from her own mother is not certain, or whether she had had tutors at Parham before she came to Westhorpe. Maria de Salinas had not been a bad mother, but her first preoccupation had always been her duty to the royal mistress who was the primary object of her devotion. And so she was away from Parham and from her little daughter rather more than she was at home. It was quite different at Westhorpe, where the children, Frances and Eleanor and little Catherine, never took second place to any outsider, even a queen, and where their entire education was directed by the mistress of the house.

By the end of the 1520s, the king had sent Queen Catherine from the Court, and his infatuation with Anne Boleyn was an open secret. It was an infatuation which neither the French Queen nor her husband the duke shared or even approved.

They had affection and respect for Queen Catherine; they had neither for Mistress Boleyn, and while they dared not openly oppose the king, they stayed away as much as they could from a Court which had become quite uncongenial to them both. Suffolk was obliged to be in more or less frequent attendance upon the king, but between her health, which was never very robust, and her responsibilities at home, the French Queen had ample excuse for staying away from Court, and she made the most of it.

And then, in the spring of 1533, Frances Brandon was married to Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset. It was an important wedding; the eldest daughter of the king's sister and the second peer of the realm, was a bride in whose veins flowed royal blood, while Dorset himself held a position of importance at Court. Frances Brandon's wedding took place in London, a London that was preparing, without enthusiasm, for the coronation of Anne Boleyn which, now that Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon was a *fait accompli*, would take place with great pomp at Westminster Hall, soon after Frances Brandon's marriage.

As soon as her daughter's wedding was over, the French Queen returned to Westhorpe. In the best of health, she would have found it difficult to witness the coronation of a woman whom she held in the low esteem in which she held Anne. But she was not in good health; the wedding festivities had been an exhausting ordeal for her and she left London for her home in Suffolk with a sigh of relief. Her husband was obliged to remain at Court; as Earl Marshal and High Steward for the day, he had to take a prominent part in the coronation ceremonies. So, too, did Dorset, her new son-in-law, who carried the sceptre in the procession.

The wedding festivities had been, in fact, more than the

French Queen's frail body could stand. She got back to Westhorpe, but soon after her arrival there she was very ill. The news of her illness reached her husband in Westminster, and he and Dorset left the Court with all possible haste, and rode eastward as fast as their horses could gallop. They were not in time. Before they reached Westhorpe the French Queen was dead. She died on June 24th, 1533.

Her body lay in state in the private chapel for three weeks, and then came the solemn procession along the Suffolk roads, fifteen miles, to the Abbey church of St Edmundsbury, where she was buried. She still lies there, in what is now Bury St Edmunds; the Abbey church was destroyed later, but her body was reinterred in St Mary's church in the Abbey churchyard.

Barely three months later, in September, the Duke of Suffolk married his ward, Catherine, Baroness Willoughby. In one brief summer Catherine's status had changed from childhood to womanhood, from the light-hearted ward of the handsome duke to his wife, mistress of his house and servants, the second peeress of the realm.

II

HENRY'S ENGLAND

By sixteenth-century standards, neither the speed with which the widower Duke of Suffolk remarried nor the difference in age between him and his bride was unusual enough to cause surprise. Widows or widowers often remarried in what would be called today indecent haste; probably the most familiar case is that of Catherine Parr, who married the Lord Admiral only five weeks after the death of her husband, Henry VIII. As for the difference in their ages – Catherine Willoughby was in her early teens, while the duke was at least forty-seven – such an age-spread between a bridegroom and his bride was not unique. The marriage, however, did cause some comment in Court circles. Chapuys, the ambassador of the Emperor Charles V of Spain, reported to his master on September 3rd:

> On Sunday next the Duke of Suffolk will be married to the daughter of a Spanish lady named Lady Willoughby. She was promised to his son, but he is only ten years old; and although it is not worth writing to your Majesty, the novelty of the case made me mention it.

The ambassador did not say what it was that he considered novel, and no one else seemed to think the matter strange enough for comment. Chapuys was probably wrong in one respect: according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the son of the duke and the French Queen was born in 1516,

which would have made him seventeen when his father married Catherine Willoughby. If that is so, and if in fact he was to have married Catherine, it is puzzling that they had not already been married, or at least formally betrothed, before the French Queen's death; they were a proper age for marriage according to the custom of the time. The boy was probably delicate – he may have inherited his mother's frail physique – for he died in March of 1534, only six months after his father's marriage to Catherine. Gossip, again Spanish, said that he died of a broken heart. But this is hard to believe of any normal lad.

Catherine's marriage to the duke had made her mistress of the house in which she had lived as a daughter for nearly half of her short life. If the transition was difficult for her, she showed no sign of it in her outward demeanour. Little is recorded about the early years of her life as Duchess of Suffolk; on the subject of her marriage there is a blank. But Catherine herself was never a blank. She was young, she was inexperienced, and the early years of her marriage to the duke were years of gaining confidence, learning to carry her newly acquired dignity, how to be mistress of a great household, wife of an experienced man with an important position both in the county and at Court. There was nothing of national import in that life of hers, and so hardly any records have been preserved. But she seems to have been not unhappy as Suffolk's wife; he was a man of great charm and personal magnetism, very proud of the beauty and of the developing intelligence and wit of his young wife.

The period during which Catherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk, was maturing into womanhood was a time of violent change in England, political and religious upheaval, which had a deep and penetrating effect upon the thinking

and the life of the young duchess. Brought up in the comfortable and secure imprisonment that was the life of a well-to-do, noble child, Catherine's mind had never remained closed, comfortably or otherwise. From her childhood when, as a very little girl, Catherine had played alone in the halls and gardens of Parham Old Hall, her mind had been active and questioning. In her childhood, however, there had been little to question. The Tudors were established and had sat for thirty-five years upon the throne of England. The gay and popular king, Henry VIII, bluff King Hal, sat on the throne at Westminster, his queenly and admirable Catherine by his side. No Englishman was ever seriously to question the rightness of Henry as King of England. As for the Church: the Pope in far-off Rome was the head of that Church, and the king should and did lead the kingdom in worshipping according to the ritual and belief of the Roman Church; not many Englishmen, hardly any of them actively or publicly, questioned the wisdom of that either – certainly not a little girl playing by herself in Suffolk. Such things were beyond the thoughts of a child, and they would hardly have been questioned even by those whose talk she might hear, whose ideas she might absorb. But 'why' is the word of children, and there is no reason to suppose that little Catherine Willoughby was different from other children in wanting to know the answers to her questions. She was to develop into a woman with a mind of her own, with strong opinions based upon her own thinking. It would not be surprising if the habit of thinking for herself which was to characterize her all through her life was formed very early, as a little girl who seldom had anyone to whom she could turn with the countless questions of childhood.

The changes in England which were to have a far-reaching

effect upon the life and thinking of Catherine Willoughby had begun to take place even before her marriage to the Duke of Suffolk. Henry VIII was all but fanatical in his wish to have sons to inherit the throne of England, and to make sure that the Tudor line would continue after his death. Only one of the children of Catherine of Aragon had lived – a daughter, Mary. And some time before 1530, Henry had realized that his wife would have no more children. How much his subsequent acts were motivated by his very real wish for a son, how much by the fact that he had wearied of Catherine of Aragon and was infatuated with Anne Boleyn, who was willing to become his wife but not his mistress, is beside the point. He divorced his Spanish queen, and in so doing he broke with the Pope and the Roman Church and set up his own Church in England on the pattern of the Roman Church, with the same ritual and many of the same priests, but without allegiance to the Pope.

The whole business of Henry's divorce and his marriage to Anne was distressing to the Duke of Suffolk and the French Queen, who loved and respected Catherine of Aragon; it was disturbing to Catherine Willoughby, whose own mother was so devoted to her royal mistress. Suffolk's loyalty to his king, however, was very deep, and he never let his own opinions regarding Henry's marital escapades cloud that loyalty. The French Queen died even as Anne Boleyn was being crowned. And Catherine Willoughby's first appearance at Court as Duchess of Suffolk was very possibly at the christening of Anne Boleyn's baby, the infant princess Elizabeth, when the Duke of Suffolk was one of the supporters of the old Duchess of Norfolk, the baby's godmother.

Anne Boleyn was no better than she might have been. And she was never popular in England. She was vain and

overbearing, and she was shrewish. There were few tears shed for her when she was executed for treason in 1536. One thing about Anne, however, was important in the story of Catherine Willoughby: she was very much interested in the reformed religion. During her brief period of ascendancy, her husband, the orthodox King Henry, was tolerant of the movement and interested in it to the point that men were licensed to preach at his Court who were the spokesmen of reform, men who had studied and were expounding the beliefs and tenets of the Continental thinkers and divines. These men were preaching not only the break from Rome; they were promoting a simpler Church, a service in English which the people could understand, and, basically important, they were promoting the Bible in English and the teaching in English of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments. Thomas Cranmer was, of course, the foremost of the Protestants – Cranmer whom Henry had contrived to make Archbishop of Canterbury in order that he might manage the divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Cranmer was a strong supporter of religious reform, but he was discreet too. Alone among the liberal ecclesiastics, he never lost his hold on the king's loyalty and affection. But there were numbers of others in the decade of 1530, men who were zealous and outspoken champions of reform. Of these the most eloquent was Hugh Latimer, one of the leaders of the group that has come to be known as the Cambridge Reformers, since many of them came from the University of Cambridge. Hugh Latimer preached for the first time before the king at the Court at Windsor on March 13th, the second Sunday in Lent of 1530. Thereafter he preached frequently before Henry, who made him Bishop of Worcester in 1535. Other reformers, men of zeal and conviction, preached at

Court during this period; but Latimer was the most important, he was the most eloquent and the most influential. And so, at the impressionable age of her mid-teens, the young Duchess of Suffolk, at Court with her husband, often listened to the sermons of Hugh Latimer, listened with the rapt attention of a thoughtful young woman just finding out for herself exactly what she thought and what she believed. It is certain that Latimer and the duchess met and talked together and that, during the 1530s, she was exposed to the brilliance and sincerity of this man, one of the greatest and most powerful exponents of religious reform in sixteenth-century England.

* * *

During all the vicissitudes and changes of Henry's reign, the Duke of Suffolk served his king with loyalty and devotion, performing whatever services his sovereign asked of him to the best of his ability, even when they were difficult or personally distasteful. As Suffolk never swerved in his loyalty to his king, Henry never swerved in his loyalty to the duke. And Catherine of Suffolk stood staunchly by her husband, giving him the devotion of a loving wife as she herself took an increasing part in her husband's life and in the activities of the Court.

Almost the first task required of Suffolk, after his marriage to Catherine Willoughby, was one which was extremely difficult for him. It was one which caused sorrow to his young duchess and to her mother, the Dowager Lady Willoughby. Suffolk was sent, in charge of a small group, to Buckden Palace in Huntingdonshire, where the divorced queen Catherine of Aragon was living, with orders from

Henry to dismiss a number of her servants, to swear the remainder to her as princess, not queen, and finally to remove Catherine herself to Somersham, in the Isle of Ely, an unhealthy and unpleasant place in the middle of the Fens. Suffolk of course undertook the mission, and he did his best to carry out his master's wishes. But he was not happy about it. The Spanish ambassador told the Emperor Charles, his master:

> The Duke of Suffolk, before he left the city on such an errand, confessed, and partook of the Communion, as his mother-in-law [Maria de Salinas] has sent to inform me; declaring at the time of his departure that he wished that some accident might happen to him on the road that should exempt him at once from accomplishing such a mission on such a journey.

Chapuys was always ready with his comments, and not always accurate. Also he was a staunch adherent to Catherine of Aragon. But in this case what he said probably reflected the duke's feeling pretty closely. No accident did occur, however. Suffolk was received by Catherine and declared to her the king's command. Catherine refused to budge; the duke reported to the Privy Council that 'the Princess dowager is the most obstinate woman that may be. There is no remedy but to convey her by force to Somersham.' Force Suffolk did not use. It was fortunate for him that he had not been instructed to use it, for it would have been next to impossible for him to have removed forcibly, to an unpleasant place, a woman whom he revered and respected, who was loved by his wife, Catherine, and by his late wife, the French Queen. So, although Suffolk conveyed the king's messages and orders to Catherine of Aragon, he left that

lady in Buckden, exactly where she was. And there she stayed until some time during the next year, 1534, when she moved to Kimbolton, not far from the town of Huntingdon, where she continued for the year and a half that was left to her of life, somewhat more comfortable than she had been at Buckden, but still a virtual prisoner.

In December of 1535, Catherine of Aragon was critically ill. The news of her condition reached Catherine of Suffolk's mother at her house in London late in the month. Lady Willoughby had been unable to get licence from the king to visit her royal mistress. She was still unable to secure it. But in refusing her permission, Henry did not reckon on the resourcefulness and determination of Catherine of Aragon's lady-in-waiting. She was no longer young, but she set out from the Barbican, her London house, on horseback in the dark hours before dawn on New Year's Eve. Out of the city she rode, and up the North Road leading to Huntingdon. It was a tough ride for a woman, in the cold raw air through a countryside bleak and barren in the grey half-light of winter. It was a hazardous ride through sparsely inhabited country, where rogues and vagabonds in those days of poverty and unemployment would not have hesitated to waylay an apparently affluent woman and her small group of servants. A good deal of Catherine of Suffolk's character, her courage and determination, came to her from her Spanish mother. Lady Willoughby got to the house where her dying mistress lay; somehow she gained entry, and once inside she found her way to the queen's chamber and never left it until six days later, after the unhappy queen had died in her arms.

Catherine of Aragon was buried in the Benedictine Abbey of Peterborough (now Peterborough Cathedral). Frances Brandon, Marchioness of Dorset, was the chief mourner, and

the young Duchess of Suffolk was the second mourner. Not long after Queen Catherine's death, her successor, Anne Boleyn, was put in the Tower, attainted of treason and finally executed.

In the autumn of 1536 a rebellion against Henry's government took place in Lincolnshire, and spread to the counties to the north. It was known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, and was a protest, among other things, against the suppression of the monasteries which was taking place throughout England. The Duke of Suffolk was in charge of the army which put down the uprising in the county of Lincoln, and in that particular county it was put down quickly. While the duke was busy fighting the rebellion, his young duchess was at home in Lincolnshire; by 1536, Catherine and Charles Brandon made either Tattershall Castle or Grimsthorpe in the county of Lincoln their principal residence, only going back to Suffolk when business demanded their presence there. Lincolnshire was not unlike Suffolk, perhaps less sunny, and on the whole, damper, but it was a pleasant countryside, and Catherine was always happy there. During the rebellion, it was not altogether the safest place for the wife of the man who was suppressing the rebels, not as safe as London would have been. But in Lincolnshire, Catherine was near her husband, and could see him occasionally, and so in Lincolnshire the stout-hearted duchess stayed, and stayed in complete safety as it turned out. Later on, Henry recognized the services of the duke in putting down the rebellion by handsome grants of land in the county to him and his duchess, lands close to Grimsthorpe which, of course, belonged to the duchess as an inheritance from her father.

By 1537, Catherine and Charles Brandon had two sons. Their first boy was born in September of 1535. They named

him Henry, and the king was his godfather; King Henry, himself so desirous of having a son of his own, was happy to stand sponsor for the little son of his favourite. Early in 1537, a second baby was born to the duchess, a boy whom she named after his father, Charles Brandon. And on October 12th, 1537, Jane Seymour, Henry's third wife, whom he had married soon after Anne Boleyn's execution, gave the king his son and heir. The king's joy and the joy of the country knew no bounds. Now the Tudor line would go on! Now the government was secure! It never occurred to anyone in the year 1537 that a girl-child could carry on that line; it was beyond the imagination of even the wildest dreamer that the sovereign who would bring that line to its superbly successful culmination would be the slender, auburn-haired little girl, Elizabeth, who watched as her baby brother was baptized.

When he was a week old, the baby prince was christened in the chapel at Hampton Court, with Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the two dukes, Norfolk and Suffolk, as his godfathers. Into the chapel came the highest dignitaries of England, ecclesiastical and lay, the clergy in their most magnificent robes, gold-embroidered; the ladies in gorgeous gowns of brocade and velvet in colours as rich as those of the jewels that hung about their necks; and the gentlemen resplendent in doublet and hose, slashed sleeves showing gleaming white silk under-sleeves, golden chains glittering about their shoulders, cloaks falling in rich folds to their heels. The sunlight through the stained-glass windows caught the lustrous colours of gown and mantle, the silver and gold and the precious gems, making the whole brilliant assemblage glitter and shine like an open jewel-case in the warm light. And in the midst of it all and most gorgeous of all, King Henry moved about, magnificent in white and gold,

genial and charming to everyone, his pride and his satisfaction showing in his every movement. The young princesses stood, silent and grave; little Elizabeth watching with wide eyes, her sister Mary, self-important as the baby's godmother, careful and solicitous. And the queen, frail little Jane Seymour, watched from her litter, weak and half sick, but happy that she had given her king his wished-for heir, the little Prince Edward. A week later she was dead, possibly of pneumonia, contracted perhaps as she was carried on her pallet through the draughty passages of the palace to her son's baptism.

In all the brilliant company who witnessed the young prince's christening, no lady was more beautiful, none more charming than the young Duchess of Suffolk. She had been duchess for four years now, her dignity was no longer strange to her. But it sat lightly upon her; she was gentle, gracious and lovely, never pompous, never overbearing; she moved easily in any company, high or humble. Shortly after the prince's christening, John Hussee, confidential agent in England for Lord and Lady Lisle when Lord Lisle was deputy of Calais, wrote a letter to his mistress. He was referring to Lady Lisle's daughter, Katherine Bassett, when he said, 'Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex say you cannot bestow Mistress Katherine better than with my Lady Suffolk, for the duchess is both virtuous, wise and discreet.' At this date the duchess was undoubtedly still the quiet young woman who thought her own thoughts and kept her own counsel, antagonizing no one and pleasing everyone by the beauty, charm and kindliness that were her characteristics. But as time went on, discretion was not an outstanding characteristic of Catherine of Suffolk. Virtuous she certainly was, and wise and intelligent. But her ready wit and quick tongue, coupled with a keen mind which cut through externals to the heart of any

matter, often led her to make remarks which could scarcely be called discreet. And before many years, her outspokenness would be noticed, and her barbed remarks at the expense of self-important people, people who, in another reign, would occupy powerful positions, would be the cause of very real peril to this high-spirited young woman.

Catherine of Suffolk's mother died in 1539. She died at Grimsthorpe, where she was living with her daughter and the duke. As the mother of the second-ranking duchess in the kingdom, the mother-in-law of the king's favourite, it might be expected that she would have had a formal and ceremonial funeral, with official mourners and all the gloomy pomp that went with such rites. But no account of her funeral exists. There is a legend that she was buried in Catherine of Aragon's grave in Peterborough; and the story goes on to tell how, when the grave was opened at the end of the nineteenth century, two bodies were discovered, both of them recognizable, and how one of them was Lady Willoughby. There is no support for the story in fact. The archives of Peterborough contain no record of a second burial in Queen Catherine's grave. Moreover, although the grave was opened in 1884, the inner, leaden, coffin was not disturbed and no second body was discovered.[1] Maria de Salinas may actually have been buried in Peterborough. It was undoubtedly her wish to be buried as near as possible to the burial place of her beloved mistress. But all we know for fact is that she died; and it is fair to guess that she was buried according to the rites of the Catholic Church to which she, like her royal mistress, had been loyal all her life.

King Henry had remained a widower for two years after Jane Seymour's death. But in 1539 he was once more thinking of matrimony. Earlier, Chapuys had written to the Emperor,

'The king has been masking and visiting with the Duchess of Suffolk.' The duke and duchess by this time spent a good deal of time in London, either at Suffolk House or at the Barbican. Catherine could take as active a part as she wished in Court life; she was a popular hostess and a sought-after guest. It is not surprising that the king, with his love of gaiety and of the give-and-take of clever repartee, found the duke's witty and charming wife delightful and stimulating, or that he enjoyed 'masking and visiting' with her.

The king married his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, late in the year 1539. She came over to England from her native country at the end of December, to be met at Canterbury by a brilliant assembly of ladies of the Court. The Duchess of Suffolk was the highest-ranking lady in the group, and the duke reported Anne's reception to Thomas Cromwell, Henry's principal minister:

> The mayor and citizens of Canterbury received her Grace with torchlight and a good deal of guns. In her Grace's chamber were forty or fifty gentlewomen, in velvet bonnets, to see her, all which her Grace took very joyously.

Each lady in the welcoming party was attended by a knight or a squire, wearing a chain of gold and dressed in a coat or gown 'of velvet or other good stuff'. The ladies in their jewel-coloured gowns of velvet or rich brocade, their skirts standing out in glowing hoops over the farthingales, their jewels sparkling in the candle-light that brightened the dark of a grey winter day, with their attendant knights resplendent in their gorgeous doublets and plumed hats, gave Anne a reception fit in every way for a queen.

The marriage between Henry and Anne, for reasons which

need not detain us, was not a success. An amicable divorce was arranged, and in 1540 the king married for the fifth time. His queen was Catherine Howard, young, pretty and Catholic.

In the summer of 1541, the king and Queen Catherine went north on a progress. They travelled as far as York, stopping en route to visit various members of the nobility in their homes, where the royal pair were lavishly entertained and where the king held meetings of his Privy Council. It was a large and gay company that travelled through the English countryside, the king and queen with their great train of servants and retainers, followed by members of the Council with theirs. The Duke of Suffolk was regular in his attendance at meetings of the Council, but early in August he left the progress and hastened back to Grimsthorpe, to be ready and waiting, with his duchess, for his sovereign's visit to them. On August 8th the royal couple and their company rode through the gates and up to the great house of Grimsthorpe, a house which the duke had rebuilt on a magnificent scale in anticipation of just such a visit as this. Now the moment had come, and the duke and duchess stood in their doorway and watched their king and his entourage ride into the forecourt, banners flying in the breeze, the trappings of the horses and the gay colours of the riders' costumes bright in the summer sunshine.

A visit from a Tudor monarch was not an unmixed blessing. The honour of having his sovereign choose to make his house a stopping place was coveted and cherished by any of the nobility. But the cost to the host was far from insignificant. Besides the king and queen themselves, there were ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting, servants, grooms, horses; and Privy Councillors who did not live close by might be

part of the company, with their wives and their servants and horses. Only a house of magnificent size could begin to hold them all. Then there would be feasting; music and entertainment such as masques and tourneys would have to be provided. As the first of the horsemen came clattering into the cobbled fore-court, with harness jingling and colours flying, the noble host waiting in his doorway must have heard, in his mind, the jingle of gold coins tumbling out of his pocket to pay the grocers, the vintners, the musicians and players and all the scores of persons who would contribute to the royal entertainment. The Duke and Duchess of Suffolk were better able than some to provide entertainment on such a scale, but even for them the cost was probably staggering.

More was going on at Grimsthorpe during this royal visit than music and masques, feasting and jousting and meetings of the Council. Catherine Howard, the beautiful young queen of whom her husband was so proud, upon whom he literally doted, had led a pretty promiscuous life before her marriage to Henry. At the start of her life with the king she was very circumspect, very careful and very eager to please her husband; but by this summer of 1541, she had gone back to her former ways. She had made Francis Dereham, one of her former lovers, her secretary; and Thomas Culpeper, her cousin and the most serious and ardent of all her loves, was one of the king's gentlemen-in-waiting and was with them on this progress. At Grimsthorpe there was a little back staircase, and up that staircase, with the connivance of one of Queen Catherine's ladies-in-waiting, came Culpeper for stolen meetings with the queen.

The duke and duchess were not aware of what was going on under their roof. Nor did the king know or dream of his wife's infidelity. But too many people did know, and after

the royal pair were back at Court, the information, with unquestionable proof, was placed in the king's hands. This was treason, and Catherine Howard paid the penalty for treason the next February – the second of Henry's queens to die by the executioner's axe.

Henry's sixth wife, whom he married in July of 1543, was an old friend of the Duchess of Suffolk. She was a widow, attractive, though not the glamorous young woman her predecessor had been. But she was charming and virtuous, wise and kind, intelligent and gentle; she was queenly in her dignity and grace. She was eight years older than the duchess; their community of interests, their mutual concern with matters of religion and of the new learning, had drawn them together and made the difference in their ages of no importance. Catherine of Suffolk was one of the small company of only seventeen persons who were present in Hampton Court chapel at the July ceremony which made Catherine Parr Henry's wife – his sixth, and last, queen.[2] The duke was away in the north on business for the king, but even without him at her side, the duchess was happy, happy that the king was marrying a woman who she knew would be equal to the task of being his consort. Her friend, she knew, would never bore the king, she was far too intelligent for that; she would never antagonize him, she was far too prudent; she would care for him and for his children with love and intelligence and tact. And Catherine Parr fulfilled all of the duchess's high hopes and expectations.

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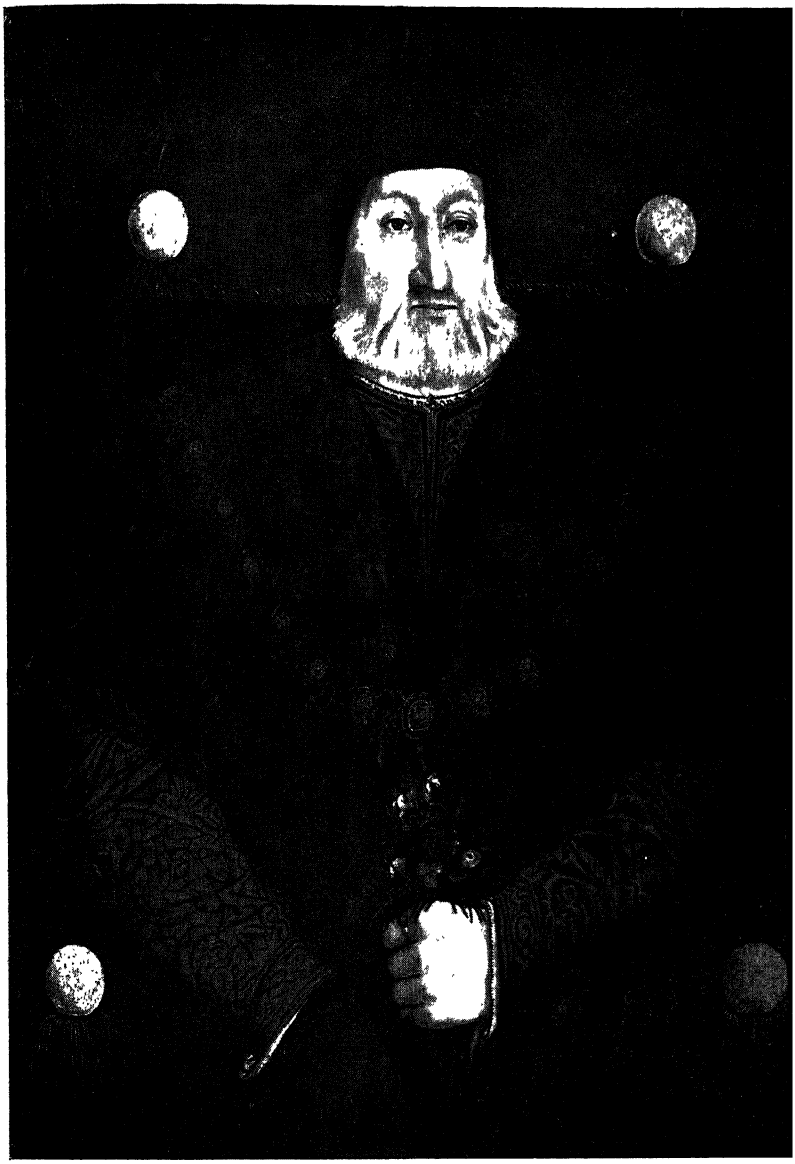
The Duke of Suffolk died on August 22nd, 1545. The day before his death, he had been present at a meeting of the



Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk

Privy Council at Guildford, where the king was staying. Charles Brandon's last illness was sudden and short, but his duchess was at his bedside when he died, as were his two daughters, Frances and Eleanor.

Many besides his own family mourned the duke's death. Not the least of these was his king, who was deeply grieved. When the death was announced in the Privy Council meeting, Henry remarked that in all their long friendship the duke had never attempted to hurt an adversary, nor had he ever said a word to injure anyone. 'Is there any of you, my Lords,' the king added, 'who can say as much?'

In his will, the duke requested 'that my body be buried in the college church in Tattershall ... without any pomp or outward pride of the world, and that certain ... dirges be done for me by all the priests of the same college and others of my chaplains only, according to the ancient and laudable custom of the Church of England.' But the king had other ideas. By royal command and at the king's expense, the Duke of Suffolk was buried in St George's chapel, Windsor, and requiem masses were said for him at Westminster Abbey and at St Paul's Cathedral.

III

THE NEW RELIGION

CATHERINE OF SUFFOLK'S life with the duke, so far as we know, had been a happy one. While there is little or nothing recorded about her years with her noble husband, her own development was in itself a record. She had become competent and easy in the complicated business of running a large establishment, charming and gracious in her social contacts. She was particularly noted for her wit; Fuller described her as 'a lady of a sharp wit and sure hand to thrust it home and make it pierce when she pleased'.[1] But she did not use that wit at the expense of those who could not answer her because of their lowly estate. She was never mean or unkind. Instinctively and always, she was a great lady.

She was much more than that, however, and much more than clever and witty and sophisticated. Behind her charming and adept manner lay an intelligent mind, which demanded valid reasons for everything, which never endorsed beliefs and customs merely because they had always been accepted, but insisted upon knowing that they were good, and why, before adopting them. Alert and inquiring all her life, she was always searching for the truth, and once she was convinced and believed a position to be essentially right, she never wavered in her adherence to it and her championing of it. Intellectual and spiritual integrity was the very essence of Catherine's character, and it governed her performance in every problem which confronted her throughout her life.

Notably it governed her attitude and actions in matters religious. By the latter part of the 1530s, she was definitely turning towards the direction in which she was to go for the rest of her life. She was turning towards the New Religion, the religion which not only opposed the Roman faith and ritual, but which found even Henry's Anglican Catholicism too much like the Roman in its confessionals and liturgy, its mass and its veneration of saints.

The earliest outward indication of Catherine's religious inclination showed itself in connection with appointments to her household. Some time in the late 1530s, the Duke and Duchess of Suffolk appointed a new private chaplain. The man whom they chose was Alexander Seton, a Scottish friar who had been at one time confessor to King James V of Scotland. In about the year 1535 Seton had, in John Knox's words, 'begun to tax the corrupt doctrine of the papacy', and to maintain that 'the law of God had of many years not been truly taught.' These heretical preachings had outraged the Scottish bishops, who had accused Seton to King James; whereupon, fearful of his king's anger, he had fled to England. Once there, again according to Knox, he had 'taught the evangel' for some years. During most of those years he lived in the household of Suffolk and his duchess, as their chaplain. In 1541 he was forced to recant. He probably did it to save his skin, and his recantation was very likely merely a form for him, which he went through without real conviction. He died in the duke's house in 1542.

His successor as private chaplain to the duke and duchess was a more heroic figure, John Parkhurst, a Surrey man by birth and a staunch Protestant who never wavered in his 'profession of the Gospel and abhorrence of popery'. Parkhurst lived in the Suffolk household until some time in 1543,

when he became domestic chaplain to Queen Catherine Parr. He went into exile when the Catholic queen, Mary, came to the throne. John Strype wrote of his going:

> The cause of religion was so dear to him that ... he took up a resolution to leave the kingdom, whatever dangers and evils befell him, and piously commended himself to the protection of God, against hangmen and papists, putting them together as equally dealing in blood ... And now being departed from his native country ... especially he had a great concern for the princess Elizabeth and for his noble patroness, the good duchess of Suffolk.[2]

When he was not preaching the Gospel, Parkhurst appears to have turned his hand to writing Latin verses about all and sundry. Some of these verses were epitaphs, some were eulogies of living men or women. The verse he wrote about the Duchess of Suffolk was laudatory to a degree.

Aeternum salve, princeps clarissima mentis
Dotibus, eximiis ad numeranda viris
Vix dici poterit, quantum tribuat tibi vulgus,
Quantum magnates, docta que turba virum.
Nil tam suspiciunt homines tua stemmata clara
Insignes dotes quam, Catharina tuos.

What Parkhurst said was, 'Hail for ever, illustrious princess! The endowments of thy mind place thee on a level with men of the highest distinction. One can scarcely say how much all people – the common folk, nobility and men of learning alike – esteem thee, holding thee in high regard, O Catherine, not so much for thy glorious heritage as for thy singular talents.'[3]

Alexander Seton and John Parkhurst each played his part in the spiritual development of Catherine of Suffolk. The important fact, however, is that two such men were chosen by the duchess and her husband to be their household chaplains. Pretty clearly, by the end of the decade of the 1530s, the duke and duchess were definitely sympathetic to the reformed religion. The duke's will, dated 1544, in which he called for 'dirges ... according to the ancient and laudable custom of the Church of England', leads one to suspect that he may have been prepared to go less far than was his duchess. However that might have been, Catherine and her husband did appoint successively two men, both professed exponents of reform, to have charge of the spiritual welfare of their household, and they did so during a period when the king's thinking had become most reactionary, his profession of orthodoxy most rigid.

But it was neither Alexander Seton nor John Parkhurst who made the initial and profound impression upon Catherine of Suffolk's thinking, who answered the questioning mind and satisfied the awakening religious fervour of the young duchess. Seton and Parkhurst were appointed after the change had come, when Catherine knew what was the direction of her thinking. The man who influenced her most deeply and who was to be her spiritual guide and mentor throughout her life – even after she went into exile for her belief and he died at the stake for his – was Hugh Latimer.[4]

Hugh Latimer was the son of a tenant farmer in Thurcaston, a small hamlet just north of Leicester. He was born about the year 1492, and in 1506 or thereabouts he went up to Cambridge University to study for the priesthood. He was ordained in July of 1515. From the start of his career he was a vigorous and compelling preacher; much later it was

said of him that he had 'disseminated more heresies than Luther'. During the first nine years of his priesthood, however, his very considerable talents and energy were directed to opposing, with all the strength and eloquence at his command, the New Learning and reformed religion at that time being studied and discussed very widely at Cambridge. And then, in 1524, Hugh Latimer, by that time chaplain of the University, gave his disputation for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. His oration was a vehement attack upon the reforming doctrines being preached by Philip Melanchthon, Martin Luther's right-hand man. In the audience that day, listening to Latimer make his address, was Thomas Bilney, also a priest and four years Latimer's junior. Earlier, Bilney had been converted to the New Religion by the study of Erasmus's New Testament, which, using the Greek text rather than the Latin, amended and revised the traditional Vulgate, to the rage and horror of the reactionaries and conservatives in England. He was a man of deep religious conviction and of great sweetness and gentleness: later Latimer called him, affectionately, 'little Bilney'. He listened to the oration, and after it was all over, he went to see Latimer in his rooms. What happened there is best told in Latimer's own words, many years later at Grimsthorpe, Catherine of Suffolk's Lincolnshire home, in his first sermon on the Lord's Prayer:

> Here I have to tell you a story which happened at Cambridge. Master Bilney, or rather Saint Bilney, that suffered death for God's Word's sake, the same Bilney was the instrument whereby God called me to knowledge; for I may thank him, next to God, for that knowledge that I have in the Word of God. For I was as

> obstinate a papist as any was in England, insomuch that when I should be made bachelor of divinity, my whole oration went against Philip Melancthon and against his opinions. Bilney heard me at that time, and perceived that I was zealous without knowledge; and he came to me afterwards in my study, and desired me, for God's sake, to hear his confession. I did so; and to say the truth, by his confession I learned more than before in many years. So from that time forward I began to smell the word of God, and forsook the school doctors and such fooleries.

In such manner was Hugh Latimer's conversion begun. From then on, he gave his whole-hearted devotion to the study of Erasmus's Testament and of the reformed thinking, which resulted in making him, always a forceful and compelling preacher, into one of the foremost exponents of the New Religion in early sixteenth-century England.

In the year following his conversion, Latimer spent as much time as he could in Bilney's company. The two men formed the habit of taking a daily walk together. Latimer would come out of Clare Hall, where he lived, close by the soaring stone laciness of the newly completed King's College Chapel, gleaming white in the afternoon light. He would walk along the bank of the little river Cam, meeting Bilney at Trinity Hall, near by, and together they would stroll under the arching trees, down the lane and across the fields to Castle Hill on the road that led to Ely – Castle Hill, so named after William the Conqueror's fortress-castle which had stood there since the eleventh century. Because of Latimer's and Bilney's love of this particular place, it came to be known as 'Heretics' Hill', a name that stuck to it for

many years to come. Here the two would pace back and forth, talking together through the afternoon hours, until the fading light and the sudden chill of early evening would remind them of how time had passed.

His conversion and his friendship with Thomas Bilney were the turning points in Hugh Latimer's life. From the first day, when Bilney came to his room, Latimer devoted all his thought and energy, indeed all his life, to living and preaching the pure Gospel of Christ. He was to be raised high in the favour of King Henry and in the hierarchy of the English Church, and, later, because of his liberal belief and preaching, he was to be cast out by the same king. After Henry's death, in Edward's reign, he returned to the pulpit and preached sermons which today, four hundred years later, are still stirring in the impact of their sincerity. And finally he was to die for his faith, in the fire at a stake in Broad Street in Oxford. But before that last day he had opened the way to freedom of thought and worship, and to an understanding and love of the Bible, to countless English men and women.

To Catherine of Suffolk, intense and thoughtful, the conviction of this man who had been reared, like herself, in the Catholic faith, was profoundly moving. Like Catherine, Latimer was a deeply thoughtful person; for him as for her, religion was the core of his thinking about life, and religious belief was for them both a matter of conviction, profound and unwavering, not of blind acceptance of tenets learned in childhood.

Hugh Latimer preached for the first time in King Henry's Court in Lent of 1530. From that time until 1539, he was a more or less frequent preacher at Westminster. And he was also called upon for special sermons, such as the funeral sermon for Queen Jane Seymour, on occasions when a really

great oration was indicated. Although he had broken from Rome, Henry VIII was fundamentally orthodox; but this was the time of the greatest religious freedom in his reign. It was also the period during which Catherine Willoughby was at her most impressionable age. It is not clear exactly when the young duchess met the man who was to teach her so much and influence her so deeply; however, as the devoted wife of the king's favourite, she was with her husband at Court on many occasions, when they both must have attended divine service in the royal chapel and have heard Latimer preach there. There is no doubt that the young duchess met and talked with the dedicated preacher at that time, and began to form the opinions and beliefs which she would hold firmly and support actively for the rest of her life. The friendship of this man of God and the duchess would last for the remainder of his days; the influence of her 'father Latimer' would be a part of Catherine of Suffolk as long as she lived, long after his own death. And so, by the year 1539, the year when Hugh Latimer was prohibited by King Henry from preaching in England, Catherine and her husband were prepared to appoint as their private chaplain a man who held the same beliefs as those for which Latimer himself had been silenced.

One of Latimer's most unrelenting enemies was Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester – an arch-conservative and the leader of the opposition to the New Religion. He was a member of Henry's Privy Council. Later on, in the reign of Henry's son, Edward, Gardiner was deprived and thrown into the Tower, and still later Edward's sister Mary, when she had become queen, released him and made him her Lord Chancellor. From that time on Gardiner persecuted, with unflagging vigour, those whom he regarded as heretics, first

and foremost Hugh Latimer. Catherine of Suffolk earned Gardiner's hatred, not only because of her religion, but also because of her wit and her readiness to make him the target for her quick tongue. One case in point occurred some time before 1545, on an occasion when the Duke of Suffolk and his duchess gave a large party. As dinner time approached, the duke asked each lady present to invite the gentleman she liked best to take her in to dinner; whereupon the duchess promptly walked up to Gardiner, saying, 'Since I may not ask my Lord whom I like best, I ask your Grace whom I like least.' Gardiner was a proud man, an unforgiving one. He never forgot nor forgave the duchess for such an open affront to his pride and dignity. This was only one of the remarks which he cited against Catherine years later, when he was seeking for evidence to prosecute her for heresy. The proud and reactionary Gardiner, whom Catherine neither liked nor respected, experienced her sarcasm more than once; and though Catherine had never sought to hide behind influence and popularity, still the position of her husband in the king's affection undoubtedly saved her, during Henry's reign, from the retaliation which might have come to her if she had not been the wife of the king's favourite. As it was, retribution came, but a good deal later, and after both King Henry VIII and the Duke of Suffolk had been a long time dead.

* * *

Catherine of Suffolk was only about twenty-six years old when the duke died. She was one of the executors of his will (the others being the Lord Chancellor Wriothesley, Lord St John and Sir Anthony Browne), and inasmuch as the duke

seems to have been always short of money and in debt, she spent many harassed hours worrying about how to satisfy his creditors. In October of 1545, two months after Charles Brandon's death, John Dymock, who was a sort of agent to the duke, wrote to Wriothesley that 'My Lord's Grace owes a great deal of money, as I will show at my coming.' It is not clear just how the duke's debts were discharged, or when, but apparently the duchess was able to maintain a household of forty persons in addition to the household servants – which she was licensed to do in May of 1546 – not an inconsiderable establishment.

The duchess did not stay in retirement for a prolonged period after her husband's death. Three months after the duke died, she gave a party at her house in London to celebrate the christening of the baby daughter of John Dudley, Lord Lisle, the Lord High Admiral of England. John Dudley had been a great favourite of Catherine's husband, who had himself knighted him during the French campaign in 1523. Later, in the reign of Henry's son, Edward, Dudley would come into great prominence as Duke of Northumberland; now he was simply the Lord High Admiral and an old friend of Catherine's husband and of Catherine herself. The duchess was one of the godmothers for the Admiral's infant, and the Princess Mary, King Henry's eldest daughter, was the other. The godfather was Van der Delft, ambassador to England of the Emperor Charles V of Spain. This was a happy occasion; one reason why it was so pleasant was that it took place during the period in Princess Mary's unhappy life when she was more nearly a normal and happy young woman than at any other time. Her father was then married to Catherine Parr who, with rare sweetness and tact, had drawn Henry's two daughters into a warm, loving family circle. Even Mary,

embittered as she had been in her girlhood when her father had set her mother aside and had married, successively, women who were at best indifferent to her welfare or happiness, could not but respond to the warmth and affection of Catherine Parr. Of all her accomplishments in making the life of the irascible old king happy and serene, far from the least achievement of Henry's last queen was that she made both Mary and Elizabeth Tudor feel loved and wanted. There is an interesting entry at about this time in the privy purse expenditures of the Princess Mary. It reads, 'Delivered to my Lady's Grace to play at cards with my Lady of Suffolk, 23s. 8d.'[3] This tiny entry reveals quite a different Mary from the more familiar, dour, stern and unhappy one. She and Catherine of Suffolk had never been close friends, although there was only four years' difference in their ages. And later on there would be real antagonism between them because of religion. But at just this time it seems clear that the princess was reaching out for companionship and finding some pleasure in the company of the duchess.

Catherine of Suffolk and Catherine Parr, however, were always very close friends. But gentle as she was, and tactful and discreet, Queen Catherine was not without enemies who sought to discredit her and to undermine her position. In February of 1546, Van der Delft told the Emperor that 'I hesitate to report there are rumours of a new queen ... Madame Suffolk is much talked about, and is in great favour, but the king shows no alteration in his behaviour to the queen.' This is the only suggestion that I have seen that the duchess was ever considered as a bride for Henry. The story was undoubtedly made up, with no foundation whatever in fact, by ardent Catholics who, perhaps because they realized how sympathetic the queen was to the reformed religion,

were seeking for stories to circulate against her. A month earlier, Chapuys had written to Mary of Hungary, '... the King favours these stirrers of heresy, the Earl of Hertford and Lord Admiral, which is to be feared ... because the queen, instigated by the Duchess of Suffolk, Countess of Hertford and the Admiral's wife, shows herself infected.' And men much closer to the king than the emperor's ambassador, the Lord Chancellor Wriothesley for one, and Gardiner also, did their best to discredit his queen in Henry's eyes. They did not succeed, nor did they succeed – and they were probably trying to do so – in breaking up the close friendship between Catherine Parr and Catherine of Suffolk. As for Catherine of Suffolk, the king for a long time had found her congenial and good company, and there is no doubt that because of her friendship with the queen, the duchess spent a considerable amount of time at the royal Court, where Henry as well as his wife enjoyed her presence.

The duchess, a beautiful and well-to-do young widow, was naturally the subject of various speculations. One story about her was to the effect that, upon failing to get the Princess Mary as a bride, the King of Poland had tried to marry her. This was not a surprising story, whether true or not; and it would not have been strange if, on his visit to England, the Polish King had made overtures to the lovely young duchess; he may well have done so. But Catherine of Suffolk never seriously entertained the idea of becoming Queen of Poland, or queen anywhere else for that matter.

* * *

In the autumn of 1546, Henry's reign, with his life, was drawing towards its close. The people were beginning to

realize the fact, and were looking ahead with some concern. A boy of barely ten years would ascend the throne, but who would rule England? Would it be the reformers, men like Hertford and Cranmer, or would it be the reactionaries like Gardiner and Wriothesley? All of these men were high in the confidence of the old king; who, the people wondered, would rule over England until the boy king would be old enough to rule for himself?

Henry had realized that he could not live until his son was old enough to take his full place, and he had given much thought to the business of providing a government for his boy's minority. The Council of Regency which he appointed numbered sixteen, and he named conservatives and liberals, Catholics and Protestants, to the group. Edward Seymour, the young king's uncle, was named, and John Dudley, by now Earl of Warwick; Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, was one of the Council, as was William Parr, Queen Catherine's brother. Henry's Lord Chancellor, Wriothesley, a Catholic and hater of heretics, was the outstanding Catholic in the group. The most notable omission was Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and leader of the reactionary wing in Henry's own Privy Council, who was not named by the king.

Henry may have thought that he was naming a Council of Regency in which the balance between liberal and conservative was fairly even. But it quickly appeared that the strong men were men of liberal leanings, particularly in matters religious. Moreover, Edward's three tutors, all of them men of great learning, were also all men of known liberal sympathies. It is easy to be wise after the event. However, one cannot but wonder whether, in his last weeks and months, with death staring him in the face, Henry actually realized

the inevitability of change in a more liberal direction, and tried to provide for that change.

Henry VIII died on January 28th, 1547, and on February 20th the boy king, Edward VI, was crowned in Westminster Abbey. Henry Brandon, the young Duke of Suffolk, Catherine's son, carried the orb in the coronation procession, and both he and his younger brother Charles were among those made Knights of the Bath in the coronation honours.

And the young king's uncle, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, became Duke of Somerset, and was fast on his way to becoming Lord Protector and the most powerful man in all England.

IV

EDWARD VI, WILLIAM CECIL AND SOMERSET

AFTER the ceremonies of Edward VI's coronation were over, the Duchess of Suffolk returned to her beloved Grimsthorpe, leaving behind her the Court with its bustle and excitement, its intrigues and strivings for position, to go back to the quiet countryside she loved. With all Catherine's social ease and sophistication, she was a child of the country, and although she always maintained a house in London, it was Grimsthorpe which she regarded as home. It was not far from the little town of Bourne, a little to the north-west of it; and while the country south of Bourne was flat and uneventful, the hills of the Lincolnshire Wolds began to rise quite suddenly just north of the town. The great house of Grimsthorpe stood on a rise, looking over the folding hills in all directions. A majestic house, it was built in the form of a square, of warm, grey stone, a tower rising at each corner and a grass area in the centre. Chimneys reached high above the slate roof, and leaded casements opened out over lawn and garden. There were fragrant herb beds; and there were borders of gaily coloured flowers, and lovely rose gardens with paths edged by low clipped yew, where Catherine loved to walk in the sunshine of a summer day or, wrapped in a long cloak, in the frequent gentle rain. The windows of her bedroom looked out over the rose gardens, their pink and crimson beauty was the first thing to greet her

eyes when she looked out in the morning, and she went to sleep at night breathing deep of their fragrance. To the west of the house, just below the lawn, stretched a great meadow, where horses grazed and drank the clear water of the stream that wandered through the lush grass. And beyond the meadow stretched the deer park, acres of tall trees, towering oak and ash and beech, and wide-spreading chestnuts. Catherine loved the house and the vast rolling acres, and she loved her life there, busy but peaceful, with time for thought and contemplation, so different from the harassed and cautious existence at Court.

The maintenance of her large establishment was no small task, and Catherine was far from idle. She had been licensed to retain forty persons in her livery besides household servants, but the number of servants in the household probably almost doubled that number, stewards, cooks, footmen, maidservants; they all came under her direction, and their welfare was her responsibility. And then the lands themselves, acre upon rolling acre; all had to be tended, planted and harvested, and the young duchess had to direct the work and see to it that it was well and effectively done. It was a sizeable job for a woman alone, but Catherine had learned her lessons well, first from the French Queen who had taught her all a young girl should know about running a house, and then from twelve years as the wife of a mature, experienced man. She ran her establishment smoothly and happily.

Of all her responsibilities, the primary one and the one which gave her the greatest happiness and satisfaction was the welfare and education of her two sons. All that she did related to them, the care of her estates which would one day belong to them, her interest in the county, which was their county as well, and her care of their own health, in body and

in mind. The wardship of Henry, the young Duke of Suffolk, had been awarded to Catherine in May of 1546. She left him at Court after King Edward's coronation, to be a companion to the boy king and to be tutored with him, but she was in touch with him and always knew how he was and how his education was progressing. Little Charles went back to Grimsthorpe, where he was taught by tutors, under his mother's supervision.

The direction of her large menage and the care of her sons' upbringing were quite enough in themselves to fill the days of the average woman of Catherine's time. But Catherine was not a typical woman of her time. She did not find it necessary to spend long hours resting, or being made beautiful by hairdressers and waiting-maids as did so many ladies in her position in the sixteenth century. Nature had been very kind to Catherine of Suffolk. With her own natural beauty she needed little outside help to make her lovely to look upon; moreover, her active mind and body gave to beautiful features alertness and mobility. Her days were full of activity in outside matters which she believed to be important. Chief among these were matters of religion, the strengthening of Protestantism and the denunciation of popery. She started her work for religious reform in her own county as soon as she had got home to Grimsthorpe from Edward's coronation. In describing the work of the Reformation at that time, the historian John Strype remarked that it was greatly advanced 'by the helping forwardness of that devout woman of God, the duchess of Suffolk'. It was written of her also that

> she was very active in seconding the efforts of government to abolish superfluous Holy Days, to remove images and relics from churches, to destroy shrines and

other monuments of idolatry and superstition, to put an end to pilgrimages, to reform the clergy, to see that every church had provided, in some convenient place, a copy of the large Bible, to stir up the bishops, vicars and curates to diligence in preaching against the usurped authority of the Pope; in inculcating upon all the reading of the Scriptures, and especially the young, the Pater Noster, the Articles of Faith and the Ten Commandments in English.

This was the essence of Catherine's religion, which she was sharing so actively with the people of her county, to bring the Word and the love of God to the people with whom she came in contact, to make it simple and understandable. She was little concerned with theological problems per se; what mattered to her was her belief that no artificial barrier should stand between men and women and their God. The mass, the Latin service, the elaborate vestments, the shrines and monuments, all these were to her as it were screens that divided God from man. In the Catholic Church, she believed, the symbols had grown so important that they had taken the place of the essence. What really mattered to Catherine of Suffolk, all that really mattered, was God and His Word; and anything which came between God and His people, either in ritual or in church government, should be abolished. Quite simply, that was what she stood for and worked for all the rest of her life. No matter what difficulties came into her path, she never wavered in her belief or in her zeal to promote the religion which meant so much to her.

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A Lincolnshire neighbour and one of the closest friends of

the duchess was William Cecil. Cecil was a year or so younger than Catherine. He had been born in the little town of Bourne, and educated at the Grantham Grammar School and at St John's College, Cambridge. His parental home, Burghley House, which he himself later enlarged and made into a great mansion, was at Stamford Baron. The little river Welland, dividing Lincolnshire from Northamptonshire, flows through the town of Stamford, and Burghley House stood about a mile south of the river in the county of Northampton, perhaps twenty miles south of Grimsthorpe. Cecil and the duchess had been neighbourly acquaintances for a number of years. From 1547 for the rest of her life he was her staunch friend and adviser. Whenever she had a problem in which she needed help or advice, she turned to him, and he always gave her his best counsel; and sometimes he in turn would ask her to use her ready wit and facile tongue in situations where he thought she might be helpful.

Cecil entered the service of the Lord Protector Somerset in the year 1547. Thus began the service of his government and his country to which he was to devote the rest of his life, in which he was to rise to greatest heights as the principal minister of the great queen, Elizabeth Tudor, some years later. Fundamentally Cecil, like Catherine, was Protestant in his belief and his sympathies. But he was far more circumspect than his friend the duchess, more careful of what he said and how he said it. Later on, particularly in Elizabeth's reign, he was very careful never to push his royal mistress further or faster than she was prepared to go in the direction of Protestantism. He knew the Tudors, knew their greatness and also their stubbornness, and he recognized the fact that excessive advocacy of the Protestant position might very well do more harm than good to the cause of religious reform

with a sovereign who, although she was Protestant, was at the same time much more in accord with the orthodox forms of worship than with the less ritualistic pattern being pushed by the zealots. Catherine of Suffolk never understood her friend's position in this matter. To her it was expediency, pure and simple, and she scolded Cecil for it and told him what she thought of him in no measured terms whenever the opportunity arose to do so. Catherine was a fighting zealot, while William Cecil was a *politique*. It was difficult, always, for the zealot to understand the *politique*; but her affection for him and her loyalty to him never wavered, nor his for her. And she never doubted, nor had she ever reason to doubt, that he would give his help in any matter, whenever she asked for it, no matter how busy he might be with affairs of state.

In November of 1547, the November after Edward's accession to the throne, a little pamphlet, written by Queen Catherine Parr, was published in London. It was a small pamphlet with a long title: 'The Lamentations of a Sinner, Made by the Most Virtuous Lady Queen Catherine, Bewailing the Ignorance of her Blind Life, Set Forth and Put in Print at the Instant Desire of the Right Gracious Lady Catherine, duchess of Suffolk and the Earnest Request of the Right Honourable Lord, William Parr, Marquess of Northampton [Catherine Parr's brother].' William Cecil wrote the introduction for the pamphlet, a rather cautious introduction, but it established beyond question the fact that his sympathies, however prudently expressed, lay with the reformers.

Interest in religious reform was becoming widespread in the period immediately following King Henry VIII's death, and popular demand for Catherine Parr's pamphlet was great enough to make a second edition necessary in March of 1548. The booklet was a fairly discreet little essay, written as

it was by the queen of an orthodox king, and actually written during his lifetime even though it was not published until after his death. It left no doubt in anyone's mind that its author, as well as those who were associated in its publication, were all firm believers in the reformed religion, the pure Gospel of Christ as they saw it.

The reform movement was growing in a sympathetic atmosphere in the days of Edward VI's reign. Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector, who was an old friend of the Duchess of Suffolk's, was a strong supporter of the New Religion, as were most of the Council who really counted. The boy king himself, by birth, inclination and education, leaned definitely to the Protestant position. He was only a boy, to be sure, but he was intelligent beyond his years, and he was the anointed King of England, and the fact that his support was given freely and not under pressure from his councillors was a source of great satisfaction and strength to the reformers. During the latter part of King Henry's reign, when the king was so rigid in his orthodoxy, they had had to be very careful not to incur the royal displeasure or to risk retaliation from the reactionaries who occupied high positions in the king's confidence and trust. Of all the spiritual leaders of reform, Cranmer alone had continued to enjoy freedom and the loyal support of his king. Henry never forgot the part Cranmer had played in his divorce of Catherine of Aragon; and so, during the latter part of the reign, Cranmer was able to do, and did do, as much as anyone could to keep the forces of reaction at least in check, and he could do so because he was always careful not to overstep the thin line that lay between the king's favour and the king's wrath. Cranmer was not the most heroic of the reformers, but the reform movement owed much

to his wisdom and astuteness. Moreover, he left behind when he finally died for his faith, a legacy for which English-speaking men and women must always be grateful to him – a service of worship in the English language so beautiful that it is used today, not only by the Anglican communion but also by people of all Protestant faiths who want to worship their God in words of ineffable beauty and clarity.

* * *

Only a few weeks after King Henry's death, his widow married Sir Thomas Seymour, newly created Baron Seymour of Sudeley, the brother of the Lord Protector. She had been in love with him before she married Henry, but had given him up to become a loyal and helpful wife to the king. Catherine of Suffolk was one of the few who knew from the start about her old friend's marriage, which was kept a carefully-guarded secret for as long as possible. It was not possible very long. On August 20th, 1548, a baby girl was born to Catherine Parr and Thomas Seymour, and eight days later the queen died of puerperal fever. Not long afterwards, Lord Seymour was put in the Tower attainted of treason, and on March 20th, 1549, the day his baby was seven months old, he was executed. His dying request was that his infant daughter, Mary, should be brought up by the Duchess of Suffolk, and the child, with her nurse, was taken to Grimsthorpe from Syon House, where she had been in the care of her uncle, the Lord Protector Somerset. According to John Strype, Somerset had promised that a pension should be settled upon the baby, and that plate and furnishings belonging to her nursery should be sent to Grimsthorpe for her use. But neither was forthcoming, and the whole burden of her

maintenance fell upon the duchess. In spite of her many protestations of poverty, the duchess was fairly affluent; in lands, particularly, she was well-to-do. But her own responsibilities, her sons and her large establishment, put a heavy drain upon Catherine of Suffolk's resources, and the added burden of little Mary Seymour was the last straw. In July, 1549, she wrote a letter about it to William Cecil, now in Somerset's service:

> I have so wearied myself with the letters that I have written at this present to my Lord's Grace and to my Lady, that there is not so much as one line could be spared for Cecil. But by that time I have made you the amends, you will be well pleased by another line; you shall have letters when they get none. That is to say, I will trouble you when I will not trouble them. So I trow you may hold you well repayed. In these my letters to my Lady, I do put her in remembrance for the performance of the promise touching some annual pension for the finding of the late queen's child; for now she with a dozen persons lyeth all together at my charge, the continuance whereof will not bring me out of debt this year. My Lord Marquis Northampton, to whom I [page torn] deliver her, hath as weak a back for such a burden as I have. And he would receive her but more willingly if he might receive her with the appurtenances. Thus groweth matters; you must help us beggars and I pray you that you may. And then will we cease our importunities. But never a word that you are required by me. So fare you heartily well, with my commendations to your wife.[1]

In August, Catherine wrote a second letter to Cecil.

Apparently the plate and furnishings for the baby's nursery had come to her, but no allowance, so that the expenses of her maintenance and the maintenance and wages of her governess, her nurse and other servants all fell upon the duchess, who found it next to impossible to discharge the financial burden and begged Cecil, once more, to try to get the allowance or pension.

There is no record of whether or not any allowance for the child was forthcoming, or of what finally became of her. Lady Cecilie Goff says that apparently no funds ever came, and that she later married and had one daughter. John Strype says that funds were provided, but that she died shortly afterwards. Whatever happened, the duchess appears to have complained of her no further.

Meanwhile, by the autumn of 1549, all was not well with Somerset and his position in the Council of Regency. In the summer of that year, a rebellion had taken place in Norfolk, led by one Robert Ket, one of the local gentry. It was a rebellion chiefly against the enclosure movement, the movement to fence in arable land and make it into pastures for sheep-raising. It was a lucrative venture for the landowners, but it displaced the tenant farmers, depriving them of homes and work and their very subsistence. Somerset put down the rebellion, although actually he was hostile towards the enclosing landlords and sympathetic to the position of the rebels; and he did try his best to enforce laws against enclosures. It is not clear how the Duchess of Suffolk felt about the rebellion, or about the enclosure movement. Apparently, in a very small way, she profited from the uprising; in October of 1550, writing to Cecil to congratulate him upon his new appointment as Secretary to the Earl of Warwick, she remarked:

> I am content to become your partner ... and I will abide all adventures in your ship, be the weather fair or foul; and although I cannot help you with costly wares ... yet I shall ply you with my woollen stuffs which may serve her for ballast. If you marvel how that I am become so cunning in ship works, you shall understand that I am about the making of one here by me at Boston's, or rather the patching of an old one, which gentle recompense I had for my wines, wherewith the Honour victualled the rebels in Norfolk the last year, so that I am now become a merchant vintner.[2]

Hugh Latimer was outspokenly sympathetic with the rebels, and said as much in a sermon before Edward VI:

> The covetousness of the gentry appeared as in raising their rents, so in oppressing the poorer sort by enclosures, thereby taking away their lands, where they had served their forefathers, to feed their cattle for the subsistence of their families, which was such an oppression that it caused them to break out into a rebellion in the year 1549.[3]

But the cards were stacked against the little folk, the yeomen farmers, and they were stacked against Somerset. The two strongest men in the Council were Somerset and John Dudley, Earl of Warwick. Somerset was the people's friend; Warwick was the friend of the rich and powerful landlord group. He was a far less admirable man than was Somerset, but he had wealth behind him, and the rich landowners, and he had the power that derives from wealth and backing. In October, 1549, Somerset was forced to resign his office, and Warwick became head of the government.

Somerset was put in the Tower for a time, but then he was released to sit again at the Council table. By that time, however, he was actively conspiring against Warwick, and, as a result of his activities, the government was in danger of splitting. The position was an impossible one. Even Somerset's friends realized that it was impossible, and they were trying their best to get him to see that his active opposition to Warwick could only end in disaster. But they were unsuccessful, and in the end Somerset was to pay for his actions with his life.

Somerset and the duchess were old friends; and Catherine was also a friend to Warwick, her husband's old favourite. Early in 1550, after Somerset's first imprisonment in the Tower, William Cecil, who was trying his best to straighten matters out and dispel the enmity between the two men, wrote to Catherine asking her to come up to Court and try what she could do. Cecil evidently thought that, as a friend to both men, and with her ready wit and facile tongue, she might be able to help resolve the difficulties. But Catherine thought otherwise. She wrote to Cecil on March 25th:

> The matter between the council and my Lord and the state of his cause, seemeth by your letter not to differ from that which before I heard. But of my greater fear you have quieted me ... Wherefore I trust my journey will be less needful, for the great good I could have done for my Lord was to have offered my counsel ... If I might be anyways persuaded that I might do my Lord any good I would gladly put myself in any venture for him. But alas, if I come and am not able to do for him that I would ... then shall I not only do him no good but rather harm ... I will bethink me how I can

master that froward and crooked mind of mine before I come, and if I can bring that to pass then will I not fail with speed to accomplish your desire and mine.[4]

Although the duchess did not go to Westminster to intercede on Somerset's behalf, Somerset, if he knew of her reluctance to come, was not antagonized by it. Only two months later, in May of 1550, he wanted to negotiate a marriage contract between his daughter, the Lady Anne Seymour, and the young Duke of Suffolk, then a boy of fifteen, Catherine's eldest son. Almost any sixteenth-century parent would have jumped at the proposal. But Catherine of Suffolk was not such a one; she was no more bound by custom and convention in her attitude towards marriage than in her attitude towards any other part of life which she regarded as important. She declined the offer, at least for the time being, and then, as she so often did when confronted with a problem, she turned to William Cecil:

... I trust the friendship between my Lord Somerset and me hath been tried such, and hath so good assurance upon the simple respects of our only good wills, that we shall not need to do anything rashly or unorderly to make the world to believe better of our friendships and for the one of us to think well of the other. No unadvised bonds between a boy and girl can give such assurance of good will as hath been tried already. And now they, marrying by our orders and without their consents, as they be yet without judgement to give such consent as ought to be given in matrimony, I cannot tell what more unkindness one of us might show another, or wherein we might work more wickedly than to bring our children into so miserable a state not to choose by

> their own liking ... This I promise you I have said for my Lord's daughter as well as for my son, and this more I say for myself and say it not but truly: I know none this day living that I rather wish my son than she, but I am not, because I like her best, therefore desirous that she should be constrained by her friends to have him whom she might peradventure not like so well as I like her; neither can I yet assure myself of my son's liking ... But to have this matter come best to pass were that we parents kept still our friendship, and suffer our children to follow our examples and to begin their loves of themselves without our forcing ... and so I doubt not but if God do not mislike it, my son and his daughter shall much better like it to make up the matter themselves, and let them even alone with it, saying there can no good agreement happen between them that we shall mislike, and if it should not happen well there is neither they nor none of us shall blame another. And so my good Cecil, being weary, I leave you to the Lord. From Kingston, the 9th of May.[5]

This was a very surprising letter from a sixteenth-century parent, particularly from a widow with two sons, who might be expected to welcome without question the opportunity for an important and influential marriage for one of those sons. It is a clear indication of how the duchess felt about marriage. At a time when arranged marriages were customary she would not lend herself to making such an arrangement for one of her children, no matter how flattering the offer or how desirable the arrangement might seem to be.

Somerset did not agree with the duchess about waiting to see how the young people felt. In a little over a year, Lady

Anne Seymour was married to the young Lord Lisle, the eldest son of the Earl of Warwick, now Duke of Northumberland. And in the following October Somerset was once more arrested, by his own daughter's father-in-law, was tried for treason, convicted and beheaded.

V

'NOT FOR THE LEAST OF HIS BENEFITS'

DURING all this time the education of Catherine's two sons had been progressing in a brilliantly promising manner. In the autumn of 1549, the two boys had entered St John's College, Cambridge. Young Henry was then fourteen, his brother Charles a year or so younger. Quite probably William Cecil had something to do with the duchess's choice of a college for her boys; St John's was his old college. It was the college associated with such men as Sir John Cheke, the great Greek lecturer and one of the tutors of Edward VI; with Roger Ascham, tutor to the Princess Elizabeth; with Walter Haddon, lecturer on Civil Law; all of them men of profound learning and liberal sympathies. In 1535, when Cecil was a student there, St John's was regarded as one of the outstanding colleges in the University of Cambridge, and it held the same high place in the regard of men of learning when the Brandon brothers went up.

Their tutor was Doctor Thomas Wilson. In 1553 Wilson published the *Arte of Rhetorique*, one of the earliest books on literary style in the English language; and still later he became one of Queen Elizabeth's principal secretaries. At this time he was a brilliant tutor, who immediately recognized the qualities of mind and character of his two noble students, who stood out so much above the average in scholarship and responsiveness.

The students lived a rigorous life in the college. Rising between four and five in the morning, they spent the hour from five to six in chapel, after which, until ten o'clock, they either studied with their tutor or attended university lectures. At ten o'clock they had a rather dull dinner, consisting usually of a piece of beef, soup and oatmeal. After dinner they would again devote themselves to their studies until five o'clock, when a supper, not unlike the dinner, was served. The evenings were given over to discussions, in Latin of course, or to studies, until nine o'clock when they would go to bed. There was no heat in the buildings where the students lived, and often they would have to run up and down for half an hour or so, before bedtime, in order to get their feet warm.

It was not an easy life, but it was the normal life for students at the time, so it was accepted with no more objection than that which any boy in any age might raise, about the food being not as good as that at home; about lack of free time, lack of comfort and the like. We hear nothing of sports in connection with the Brandon boys, nothing about dramatics, or any of what we call today extra-curricular activities. All that we know is that they were boys of singularly lovely character, and of unusual knowledge and ability in learning; boys who worked hard and did extremely well in their pursuit of education. And although they lived such a stark and rigorous life, their apparel, at least, was gay and rich. In an inventory dated 1551, among the clothing listed as belonging to Henry, the young Duke of Suffolk, are such items as 'a black velvet gown furred with sables ... a pair of crimson velvet hose ... a nightgown of black damask furred with conie ... a velvet cap with fourteen diamonds and another with fourteen rubies,' and so forth; and Charles Brandon had 'a suit of crimson satin embroidered with

silver, given to the duchess by the King, with buttons of gold; a nightgown of grogram furred with jennet ... a taffeta hat with a brooch.'[1]

When her sons went to St John's College, the duchess took a house in Kingston, a little village five or six miles to the west of Cambridge, in order to be near them. One of her earliest happy acts there was to welcome to Cambridge the great German theologian, Martin Bucer. The contacts between the English and continental reformers had been close all along and Bucer had been in touch, by letter, with Thomas Cranmer, who had invited him to come to England and had been instrumental in getting him appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. Some time earlier, and also due to Cranmer's influence, the regius professorship of divinity at Oxford had been conferred upon Peter Martyr, one of Bucer's close friends and, like him, a great reformer. Bucer arrived in Cambridge in November of 1549, and the next January he opened a course on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. Henry and Charles Brandon studied with Martin Bucer, and their mother attended many of his lectures, and became a devoted friend to him as well, and to his wife and children, who joined him in Cambridge before the winter was over. Their friendship, although it turned out to be of very short duration, was a source of profound pleasure to Catherine of Suffolk, and brought great happiness to Bucer himself. Catherine was young, intelligent and eager-minded; he was thirty years older than she, in failing health but never in failing mental and spiritual vigour. He found in her an absorbed listener, an understanding questioner and an apt student of the reformed religion of which he was such a learned and brilliant exponent. All that was in her power the duchess did for her friend's comfort. She gave him a cow and

a calf for himself and his family, among other things, and towards the end, when he was sick and dying, she helped to nurse him and did everything she could to ease his suffering and to help his wife.

Martin Bucer died on February 27th, 1551, only a little over a year from the day he had arrived in Cambridge. He was buried in Great St Mary's church in the town, and such had been the sweetness of his character, as well as the brilliance of his mind, that the entire town, university officials and students and townsfolk too, mourned him and attended his funeral – some three thousand persons all told. His death was a great personal grief to the duchess. She had known him for less than two years, but she had loved him for his gentleness and understanding, and for the integrity of his mind and spirit.

Sad as she was at the loss of Martin Bucer, a much greater grief was in store for Catherine in that tragic year of 1551. Early in the summer, before the end of the Cambridge term, the dread sweating sickness broke out in England and struck the university town. The great sixteenth-century French surgeon, Ambrose Paré, described the sweating sickness as 'a catarrhe with difficulty of breathing and a straitness of the heart and lungs', which would suddenly strike a city, attacking as many as two or three hundred in a day, killing most of them, and then pass on as suddenly as it had come. The description of it given by the English physician, John Caius, was more picturesque in a macabre way. In 1552, Caius wrote *A Boke or Counceill against the Disease commonly called the Sweate, or Sweating Sickness*, in which he said that it

> immediately killed some in opening their windows, some in playing with children in street doors, some in

> one hour, many in two it destroyed, and at the longest, to them that merrily dined it gave a sorrowful supper. As it found them so it took them, some in sleep, some in wake, some in mirth, some in care, some fasting and some full ... if the half in every town escaped it was thought great favour.[2]

This was the disease which struck Cambridge in July of 1551, a disease for which there was no known cure, from which there was no hope of recovery. When it invaded the university town, Henry and Charles Brandon were promptly removed from their college and were taken to Buckden – the same Buckden which had been the home for a time of Catherine of Aragon – where they were warmly received by a kinswoman of theirs, Lady Margaret Neville, who welcomed them affectionately. But the two boys were strangely sad, particularly the young Duke of Suffolk. In the middle of the evening meal, he looked gloomily at Lady Margaret and said,

'Where shall we sup tomorrow night?'

Lady Margaret was startled. 'With me, I trust, or at least with one equally well known to you,' she answered.

'No,' said Henry Brandon, 'never shall we sup together again.'

Almost immediately the boy was stricken with the disease, and within the next few hours he died. His brother Charles lay ill in another room. Opening his eyes suddenly, he looked up at the doctor who was attending him and said that it was very sad to be bereaved of a dear one.

'Why do you say that?' asked the physician.

'My brother is dead,' answered Charles, 'but no matter, for I will go straight after him.'

Inside an hour, and in spite of all the doctor's efforts to relieve him, Charles Brandon, too, was dead.

The duchess was unwell in her house at Kingston when the news reached her that her sons had been moved away from Cambridge. She rose instantly from her bed and followed them to Buckden, arriving there to find Henry dead and Charles dying. The courageous and resourceful young woman who had never hesitated to face any difficulty, however great, was prostrate with grief. Everything she had stood for, everything she had fought for was secondary to her devotion to her two boys, her concern over their present welfare, her hopes and dreams for their future. Dazed and stunned, she knew simply that the very centre of her life, her reason for existence, was gone from her, leaving a vacuum behind. She did not know, did not even care, what was the nature of the terrible disease which had swept over Cambridge and taken her boys from her. All that her numbed mind could grasp was that they were gone. They had been taken away from the university as quickly as possible, in the desperate hope that the contagion had not reached them and that they might be spared. Catherine had been told of their departure immediately, and had rushed to follow them, to be with them at Buckden, to care for them if need be; she had arrived to find – nothing. Tragedy stared her in the face and she stared back, blindly. Normally the duchess was fond of people, but now no one could help her, no one could even reach her to try to comfort her. There were decisions to be made which only she could make, questions which only she could answer, about funeral ceremonies and burial. But when her friends, helpfully and lovingly, came to her to ask her what she wished to have done, she seemed not even to hear them. And so the brothers were buried at Buckden, quietly

and privately. Later on, when Catherine was once again mistress of herself, eulogies were made, and epitaphs in keeping with the position and the rare promise of these gifted children. But for the time being, Catherine cared for nothing and could decide nothing.

The duchess left Buckden, that house of tragedy; and she left her little house in Kingston, and the University of Cambridge, where her hopes had been so high, the future had seemed so glowing. She went home to Grimsthorpe, to the seclusion of her own house and her own garden, where she had brought up her sons and watched them play as little boys. The days went by slowly, the hours from dawn to evening seemed interminable as she walked alone through the silent house that had once, such a short time ago, been full of laughter and play. She might have gone somewhere else, have plunged herself into a life of activity in an effort to forget her grief. But here in Grimsthorpe was where Catherine knew she had to find herself, quietly and prayerfully, to discover whether her belief and her faith could and would sustain her, to build her life anew upon its shattered ruin. And she did just that. Alone in the quiet of her home, full of the memories of her adored sons, her courage reasserted itself as her belief and trust in God came back to her. By September she was reaching out for the comfort and understanding of her close friends. On the 7th, she wrote to William Cecil:

> I give God thanks, good Master Cecil, for all His benefits which it hath pleased him to heap upon me; and truly I take this last (and to the first sight most sharp and bitter) punishment not for the least of His benefits, inasmuch as I have never been so well taught by any

other before to know His power, His love and mercy, mine own weakness and that wretched state that without Him I should endure here. And to ascertain you that I have received great comfort in Him, I would gladly do it by talk and sight of you. But as I must confess myself no better than flesh, so I am not well able with quiet to behold my very friends without some part of these vile dregs of Adam to seem sorry for that whereof I know I rather ought to rejoice. Yet notwithstanding I would not spare my sorrow so much but I would gladly endure it were it not for other causes that moveth me so to do, which I leave unwritten at this time ... if it please you, you may use him that I send you as if I stood by. So with many thanks for your lasting friendship, I betake you to Him that both can and I trust will govern you to His glory and your best contentation.[3]

* * *

With the death of the two Brandon boys, the dukedom of Suffolk had become extinct in the male line. Their half-sister, Frances Brandon, the eldest daughter of their father and the French Queen, stood next in line. On October 4th, 1551, King Edward conferred the dukedom upon Frances's husband, Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, at the same ceremony at which the Earl of Warwick was created Duke of Northumberland and William Cecil was knighted.

The properties which had come to Charles Brandon and his heirs male, by grant from King Henry VIII, had reverted to the Crown. Vaudey Abbey, an old Cistercian monastery which had been dissolved in 1533, and Edenham and Scotelthorpe, had all been granted to the duke and Catherine

jointly, therefore they continued as her property. They lay close by Grimsthorpe and had become a part of it. Tattershall Castle, in Lincolnshire, went back to the Crown, but Eresby, not far from Tattershall, belonged to Catherine, like Grimsthorpe, as part of her inheritance from her father. So the duchess still owned enough land to keep her very busy and to bring her an income. She stayed at Grimsthorpe quietly through the autumn of 1551, but by Christmas she apparently felt more like mingling with people, and she spent the holidays with her stepdaughter, Frances, and her husband and three young daughters. The eldest of these daughters, the Lady Jane Grey, was then a girl of fourteen, only slightly younger than Catherine's own two boys who had, of course, been her uncles, being half-brothers to her mother. Jane must have been a comfort to Catherine of Suffolk. She was a singularly sweet, gentle girl, with great beauty both of body and of mind. She was reputed to be one of the most studious and learned young women in England: men like John Aylmer, her tutor, and Roger Ascham were constantly amazed at the clear and lucid quality of her mind and by her aptness in learning. The duchess, missing her own two sons so sorely, found a poignant kind of comfort in the company of this lovely and gifted child, so suggestive, in many ways, of her young uncles.

When Henry Grey became Duke of Suffolk, his wife became the duchess; Catherine was, of course, the dowager duchess. The term dowager, however, was never used in connection with her; Catherine was known as the Duchess of Suffolk until the day of her death. She went back to Grimsthorpe after Christmas, and she was there all through the winter and spring. In June of 1552, she wrote to William Cecil, sending with the letter a buck from her deer park.

By the late coming of this buck to you you shall perceive that wild things be not ready at commandment. For truly I have caused my keeper, yea, and went forth with him myself on Saturday at night after I came home (which was a marvel for me) but so desirous was I to have had one for Mr. Latimer to have sent after him to his niece's churching. But there is no remedy but she must be churched without it ... But as touching your hunting here, I would be sorry you should leave it undone ... I assure you I have not to my knowledge two bucks more in my parks. But that must not discourage you from hunting; for if it please you to take the pains to kill them, I am sure I get them not unless I kill them out of hand. Wherefore I would desire you to take the pains and take your part of them. And also you may have as good sport at the red deer, and I pray you take it, for I am very glad when any of my friends may have their pastime here, and nothing grieves me but when I can not make their pastime with them. And therefore at your pleasure come, and bring with you whom you will, and you shall be welcome and they also for your sake. And so, with my hearty commendations ... from Grimsthorpe this present Wednesday at six o'clock in the morning and like a sluggard in my bed.[4]

Catherine added a postscript to this letter: 'Master Bertie is at London to conclude if he can with the heirs. For I would gladly discharge the trust wherein my Lord did leave me before I did for any man's pleasure anything else.'

Obviously the duchess was an early riser. Not many women in her position, then or now, would consider them-

selves 'sluggards' for being in bed at six o'clock in the morning. But perhaps the most revealing part of this letter is the postscript, with its reference to Master Bertie, who, a year later, would become Catherine's second husband. The postscript seems to indicate that as early as the summer of 1552, Catherine was thinking of marrying Richard Bertie. She was the executor of the estate of the duke, her first husband, a duty which she wished to discharge before she 'did for any man's pleasure anything else'. But it seems obvious that she was considering marriage when she wrote the letter. She may have been considering it for some months; in a letter to Cecil which she had written eight months before, in September 1551, she had spoken to him of someone she was sending to him, one whom he could 'use as if I stood by'. This, too, may have been the same Master Bertie, to whom the duchess had even then given, if not her promise, her complete trust and confidence.

Richard Bertie was gentleman usher to the Duchess of Suffolk. A gentleman usher was one of good birth and lineage, who was attached to a noble household and walked ahead of his master or mistress in ceremonial processions or other progresses. In one of the sermons he preached before Edward VI, in 1549, Hugh Latimer had referred to a duchess and her gentleman usher in allegorical terms:

> This faith is a great state, a lady, a duchess, a great woman; and she hath ever a great company and train about her as a noble estate ought to have. First she hath a gentleman usher that goeth before her, and when he is not there is not Lady Faith ... Now as the gentleman usher goeth before her, so she hath a train that cometh behind her ... they be all Faith's company, they are all

> with her ... Lady Faith is never without her gentleman usher, nor without her train.

There were only two duchesses in the kingdom at the time that Latimer preached this sermon, Catherine, his friend and patroness, and the Duchess of Somerset, who was noted for her arrogance and her overbearing manner which had made her extremely unpopular. It seems certain that when he spoke in those terms of Faith, Hugh Latimer had the Duchess of Suffolk in his mind; and her gentleman usher was, of course, Richard Bertie.

Richard Bertie had considerable responsibility in Catherine's household. He transacted a good deal of business for her, sometimes going up to London to do so. He was a man of some background, tracing his lineage back to one Leopold de Bertie, whose ancestors were said to have landed in England with the Saxons and who had himself been Constable of Dover Castle at the time of King Ethelred – undoubtedly a position of trust in a time when there was constant fear of invasion of England. Thomas Bertie, father of Richard, was governor of Hurst Castle on the south coast of England near the Isle of Wight, guarding the entrance to the Solent. Henry VIII built Hurst Castle early in his reign, and Thomas Bertie may have been the first governor of that stronghold. And so, although far below the duchess in rank, Richard Bertie does not appear to have been, as Lady Cecilie Goff maintains, meanly born. He was born in Southampton in the year 1517, was entered at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1534 and proceeded to his B.A. in 1537. He was an accomplished gentleman, who spoke French, Italian and Latin fluently, and was reputed to be bold and clever in conversation and quick at repartee. Catherine would have

enjoyed those qualities and found him congenial. As a younger man he had spent a short time in the household of the Lord Chancellor Wriothesley. He was a man of a commanding presence; Holbein's portrait shows a high forehead, arched brows above large and intelligent eyes, an aquiline nose and a long beard which made him look considerably older than in fact he was. Unlike her first husband who had been so much her senior, Bertie was only a little older than the duchess. And he was as steadfast in the Protestant faith as Catherine was herself. He had been a member of Catherine's household for some time, and they had worked together and talked together and had come to know one another well. And in Catherine's house Richard Bertie had had the opportunity of knowing her friend and spiritual counsellor, Hugh Latimer. A mutual respect and friendship had grown up between the two men, which was a great source of happiness to Catherine of Suffolk.

During the year 1552, Hugh Latimer spent a great deal of time at Grimsthorpe as the guest of the duchess. It was while he was staying there at that time that he preached in Catherine's private chapel, to her household, the seven sermons on the Lord's Prayer, in the first of which he said:

> I intend ... at the request of my most gracious lady, to expound unto you, her household servants and others that be willing to hear, the right understanding and meaning of this most perfect prayer which our Savior Himself taught us.

Latimer did as much as any Englishman to establish the Lord's Prayer as an important part of Protestant devotion and worship. He had stressed its importance in his preaching as early as 1533, and throughout his sermons can be found references

to it. The sermons he preached at Grimsthorpe in 1552 analysed and explained this 'whole and perfect' prayer, phrase by phrase.

Early in the year 1553, Catherine of Suffolk and Richard Bertie were married. Hugh Latimer was almost certainly the minister who married them. He was again visiting at Grimsthorpe from the day after Christmas, St Stephen's Day, 1552, at least until after Twelfth Day – the Epiphany – 1553; he preached there on December 26th and 27th, and again on Twelfth Day; and it may very well be that his hostess was married during that time. The actual date of her marriage is not recorded, but it was very early in the year 1553. Latimer would have been happy officiating at the marriage of the duchess to Richard Bertie. He had the same abhorrence as Catherine had to marriages made solely for position and advancement; he had been outspoken in his opposition to such matches. This marriage of his friend and benefactor was the kind of marriage in which he believed. With Catherine's position, wealth and beauty, she could have made what would have been regarded as an important match. But the woman who had declined to make a loveless match for her son would not conceivably have married without love herself. And so she married her gentleman usher, a man whose quality she knew, a man with whom she had fallen in love and who had shown himself to be, as he was for the rest of their life together, devoted above everything else to her welfare and her happiness.

She married this man who would 'love, honour and keep her', who was as convinced as she herself was of the Protestant faith, and they started their life together, serene and happy, at Grimsthorpe, busy with the many responsibilities of Catherine's estates and with the propagation and encour-

agement of the reformed religion among the people of the county. It was a good and useful life, and the duchess and her new husband were happy in it. But the storm clouds were gathering. In January 1553, the young king Edward VI had caught a bad cold which left the somewhat frail boy with a hard, racking cough; it was the first sign of a rapid consumption. The ambitious and unscrupulous Duke of Northumberland, the actual head of the government, realized that Edward's days were numbered. He realized also that upon Edward's death his half-sister, Mary the Catholic, daughter of King Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, would inherit the throne of England, and that would be fatal to him. It would mean the end of his power, his prestige, his whole position. Mary would come to the throne, that is, unless he could devise some way of stopping her.

Northumberland moved quickly and relentlessly. His movements were helped by the easy acquiescence of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk. Henry Grey was a weak man and an ambitious one. After the fall of Somerset, he had hitched his wagon to Northumberland's star, and he was a ready ally in that crafty duke's scheming. The Duke of Suffolk had moved his family to Sheen, very near to Syon House, the home of Northumberland. And Suffolk's eldest daughter was lovely, young, gifted and of blood royal – the Lady Jane Grey, a friend and sometime companion to the young king, her cousin. At one time a marriage between King Edward and the Lady Jane had been talked about, but it had come to nothing. Northumberland saw in this young woman, barely sixteen years old, the perfect tool for achieving his purposes. Jane was intelligent and beautiful, and, most important, she was Protestant. Northumberland arranged a marriage between her and his son, Guildford Dudley. Jane was unhappy

about the marriage, and she resisted it as long as she could, but her father, Northumberland's spineless tool, insisted, and broke down her resistance. On May 21st, 1553, Lady Jane Grey and Guildford Dudley were married in London. Northumberland then persuaded the young, sickly King Edward to draw up a 'devise of the succession', in which he left the crown of England to the Lady Jane and her heirs male.

On July 6th, 1553, at the age of sixteen, King Edward VI died, and four days later Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed Queen of England in London. The country was not enthusiastic for her. Moreover, in all his complicated schemings, Northumberland had failed to do the one thing essential to the success of his plan. He had failed to secure the person of Mary Tudor. And Mary Tudor had no intention of stepping aside. When she had become aware of what was happening in London, she had taken refuge in the Duke of Norfolk's castle at Framlingham in Suffolk. She wrote to the Council on July 9th, proclaiming herself her brother Edward's lawful successor. The Council, under Northumberland's leadership, replied that Lady Jane was the Queen of England. But Mary's supporters were in arms in the eastern counties, and were moving towards London. Mary was going to fight to defend her right to the succession. Northumberland went out to meet her at the head of an army, but he had no sooner left the city than the members of the Council began to desert, fearing for their lives. Before Northumberland had even reached the county of Suffolk, Lady Jane's own father had proclaimed Mary queen in London. Northumberland yielded himself a prisoner two days later, and when Mary entered London she entered as queen with her country solid behind her.

> As for Lady Jane, a lovely young woman, zealous for her faith, already distinguished for her learning and quite out of place in the intrigues of her unscrupulous father-in-law, she would gladly have taken leave of royalty and gone back to her books and her devotions. But she could not choose. The Tower, which for a brief nine days had been her royal palace, presently became her prison. She was not to leave it finally until she took her last sad journey to the scaffold.[5]

Catherine of Suffolk had had no part in these events. With her husband she had been living quietly in Lincolnshire, busy with her estates, busy with the forwarding of the reformed religion and busy giving Richard Bertie his first child, a daughter, Susan. She was far from the events in London, but not so far that news of them could not reach her. She had always been on friendly, even affectionate terms with her stepdaughter Frances, Lady Jane's mother. And the Lady Jane herself was particularly dear to the duchess. Catherine was unhappy and apprehensive, concerned over what would happen to the lovely girl who was the innocent pawn in the intrigues of her father-in-law and her own father, apprehensive about the probable effect upon England of Mary's accession to power. The Duchess of Suffolk knew the Princess Mary Tudor. They had never been close friends, but they had been friendly acquaintances. The duchess had no doubt at all about Mary's attitude towards religion, or that she would do everything in her power to impose Roman Catholicism upon England when she came to the throne. Catherine of Suffolk would never have lent herself to a plot which could not but result in victimizing the innocent Jane

Grey. But she could only view the prospect of Mary as queen with very real dread.

Mary entered London as queen on August 3rd, 1553, and practically her first act was to release from the Tower the prisoners detained there by her father and her brother, including of course the Duke of Norfolk (a strong Catholic who had been imprisoned for treason by Henry VIII), and Stephen Gardiner, one-time Bishop of Winchester. Gardiner had been deprived and put in prison early in Edward's reign; Mary restored him to his see and made him her Lord Chancellor. He was, in fact, though not in name, Prime Minister. His star was now in the ascendancy, and before long he would be relentless in the use of his power against the hated heretics who had caused his downfall. One of the early targets of his persecution would be the fearless, forthright young woman whose religious position was so repugnant to him, who had exercised her wit at his expense often enough to earn his hatred and his undying wish for vengeance – Catherine Bertie, Duchess of Suffolk.

VI

THE STORM BREAKS

IMMEDIATELY upon Mary's accession, the restoration of Roman Catholicism in England began. The three most outspoken of the Protestant clerics, Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer, were promptly sent to the Tower; and the questionings began. Catherine of Suffolk was horrified; although in her inmost heart she had foreseen what would undoubtedly happen, she was profoundly shaken. And she was certain that this was only a foretaste of more that was to come, more persecution of those whom Mary and Gardiner regarded as heretics, more questionings, more imprisonments. Her own turn would come, she could have no doubt of that. She had been far too outspoken in her antipathy to Romanism, too energetic in her propagation and support of the Protestant cause for her to be able to escape. But she made up her mind that as long as possible she would do all she could for those who were already suffering. She sent alms to the men in the Tower: a letter from Ridley to Augustine Bernher, Latimer's Swiss servant, reads in part:

> I have received my Lady Grace's alms, six royals, six shillings and eightpence. I have written a letter to her Grace, but have made no mention thereof, wherefore I desire you to render her Grace hearty thanks. Blessed be God; as for myself, I want nothing, but my Lady

> Grace's alms come happily to relieve my poor brother's [Latimer's] necessity, whom you know they have cast and keep in prison ...[1]

On the cover of the letter is written: 'This alms was sent him by the Lady Catherine, duchess of Suffolk.'

Ridley was taking every precaution to protect the duchess. He did not even mention her kindness in a letter to her, doubtless fearing lest it be intercepted. But Catherine was not trying to protect herself. Her friends, the friends of what she believed in so completely, were in trouble, and she would do all she could to help them, no matter what the cost to herself.

In Lent of 1554, Gardiner made his move against the duchess. He gave orders to the Sheriff of Lincoln to bring Richard Bertie before him in London. The sheriff, knowing Bertie to be a man of his word, contented himself with taking his bond, with two sureties of a thousand pounds, to appear before the bishop on Good Friday.[2]

In the morning of Good Friday, Richard Bertie presented himself at Gardiner's palace, to find the bishop in a white rage at him for not having obeyed his summons. Bertie disclaimed any knowledge of a summons, saying that the sheriff had told him only that the bishop wished to see him and had taken his bond to appear on this day. The bishop was not mollified, but he said, testily,

'I have appointed myself this day for devotion, and I will not trouble myself with you. But I enjoin you in a thousand pounds ... to be here again tomorrow at seven of the clock.'

Richard Bertie was prompt the following morning, and was admitted to Gardiner's presence immediately. The bishop led up to his real reason for summoning Bertie by informing

him that it was 'the Queen's pleasure that you shall make present payment of four thousand pounds due to her father by duke Charles, late husband to the duchess your wife, whose executor she was'.

'May it please your Lordship,' Bertie answered, 'that debt is estalled [arranged to be paid in instalments] and is according to that estallment truly answered.'

'Tush, the Queen will not be bound to estallments in the time of Ket's government,' Gardiner spoke haughtily, 'for so I esteem the late government.'

'The estallment was appointed by King Henry the Eighth,' answered Catherine's husband. 'Besides, the same was by special commissioners confirmed in King Edward's time, and the Lord Treasurer being an executor also to the duke Charles, solely and wholly took upon him before the said commissioners to discharge the same.'

'If it be true that you say, I will show you favour,' the bishop answered him. 'But of another thing, Master Bertie, I will admonish you as meaning you well. I hear evil of your religion, yet I hardly can think evil of you, whose mother I knew to be as godly a Catholic as any within the land, yourself brought up with a master whose education, if I should disallow, I might be charged as author of his error. [Gardiner here undoubtedly referred to Wriothesley.] Besides, partly I know you myself, and understand enough of my friends to make me your friend.' The bishop spoke smoothly. 'Wherefore,' he went on, 'I will not doubt of you; but I pray you if I may ask the question of my lady your wife, is she now as ready to set up the mass as she was lately to pull it down, when she caused a dog in a rochet to be carried and called by my name? Or doth she think her lambs now safe enough which said to me when I veiled [doffed] my bonnet to her

out of my chamber window in the Tower, that it was merry with the lambs now the wolf was shut up? Another time, my Lord her husband having invited me and divers ladies to dinner, desired every lady to choose him whom she loved best, and so place themselves. My Lady, your wife, taking me by the hand for that my Lord would not have her to take himself, said that for as much as she could not sit down with my Lord whom she loved best, she had chosen me, whom she loved worst.'

'Of the device of the dog,' answered Bertie quietly, 'she was neither the author nor the allower. The words though in that season they sounded bitter to your Lordship, yet if it should please you without offence to know the cause, I am sure the one will purge the other. As touching setting up of mass, which she learned not only by strong persuasions of divers excellent learned men, but by universal consent and order whole six years past, inwardly to abhor, if she should outwardly allow she should both to Christ show herself a false Christian and unto her prince a masking subject. You know, my Lord, one by judgement reformed is more worth than a thousand transformed temporizers. To force a confession of religion by mouth contrary to that in the heart worketh damnation where salvation is pretended.'

'Yea, marry, that deliberation would do well if she were required to come from an old religion to a new,' the bishop spoke with heat, 'but now she is to return from a new to an ancient religion, wherein when she made me her gossip she was as earnest as any.'

'For that, my Lord,' answered Bertie, 'not long since she answered a friend of hers, using your Lordship's speech, that religion went not by age but by truth, and therefore she was to be turned by persuasion and not by commandment.'

'I pray you, think you it possible to persuade her?'

'Yea, verily, with the truth, for she is reasonable enough,' answered Catherine's husband.

'It will be a marvellous grief to the prince of Spain,' said Gardiner sadly, 'and to all the nobility that shall come with him, when they shall find but two noble personages within this land of the Spanish race, the Queen and my Lady your wife, and one of them gone from the faith.'

'I trust they shall find no fruits of infidelity in her,' answered Bertie.

The bishop responded by urging Richard Bertie to strive earnestly for the reform of his wife's religious opinions, and with protestations of friendship towards him, he dismissed Bertie from his presence.

But Richard Bertie was not easy in his mind as he left the bishop's palace. What, he wondered, lay behind that suave exterior? What plans were maturing behind those cold, inscrutable eyes? Gardiner's expressions of friendly intent did not delude Catherine's husband into any false sense of security. He went home to his wife thoughtfully, far from comfortable about the interview just over. Nor were his forebodings lessened during the next few days, as his friends assured him that far from entertaining the friendship he had professed, Gardiner would never forgive Catherine. The bishop was an uncompromising Catholic; in his eyes Catherine was a heretic, to be dealt with as such unless she could be made publicly to recant. He was, moreover, a proud and haughty man, and Catherine had made fun of him and treated him without respect. Probably nothing could ever erase from his mind the memory of her taunts, or mitigate his personal desire for vengeance.

Richard Bertie realized all this, and he was afraid for his

beautiful and fearless wife. He knew, too well, the punishments for heresy, the imprisonment, the endless questionings and inquisitions, the cruelties. Hugh Latimer had been in the Tower for nearly two years now, as had Ridley and Cranmer and the others. The wheels of the machine were beginning to turn. Bertie knew very well that the chances of Latimer and their other friends being allowed to live were slim. What would happen to his Catherine, with her steadfast faith, her readiness to defend that faith and her quick and often imprudent wit?

Bertie knew that he must act without delay. He sensed that Gardiner had not quite made up his mind what he was going to do with Catherine; he might, if he acted quickly, forestall him. And if the bishop's cupidity was as great as Richard Bertie guessed it was, he might be induced to help Bertie save his wife, without realizing that he was doing so.

And so Catherine's husband sought out Gardiner once more. There were, he told the bishop, large sums of money owing to the duchess's late husband, the Duke of Suffolk, from overseas, and especially from the Emperor Charles V. As the duke's executor, the duchess had authorized him, her husband, to act for her in recovering these moneys. He would have to go overseas to get this fortune, Bertie told the bishop; all other efforts had failed. But now, when a marriage was in contemplation between Queen Mary and the son of the emperor, the time would seem ripe to persuade the emperor to discharge his obligation to one of the English nobility. And so he, Bertie, was asking the bishop for his help in procuring a passport to travel overseas as much as might be necessary to recover the funds.

The prospect of a considerable sum of money coming into England did not fail to interest Gardiner. The fact that it

would be coming to one who would probably, sooner or later, be attainted for heresy and whose possessions would therefore be forfeit, may also have crossed his mind, all of which Bertie had probably counted upon. However, the bishop did not show his feelings by so much as the flicker of an eyelash.

'I like your device well,' he told Bertie, 'but I think it better that you tarry the prince's coming and I will procure you his letters, also to his father.'

But Bertie knew he dared not tarry.

'Nay,' he spoke respectfully, 'under your Lordship's correction and pardon of so liberal a speech, I suppose the time will be less convenient; for when the marriage is consummate, the Emperor hath his desire, but till then he will refuse nothing to win credit with us.'

'By Saint Mary, you guess shrewdly,' exclaimed the bishop. 'Well, proceed in your suit and it shall not lack my helping hand.'

So Richard Bertie proceeded in his suit; and by the end of the spring, with the bishop's backing, he had obtained from Queen Mary licence to cross and recross the seas as might be necessary to conclude his business. And in June he sailed from Dover on his first trip, leaving the duchess with their baby daughter behind him in London.

Without doubt it was hard for Bertie to leave his wife behind him; without doubt it was hard for her to be left behind. But Catherine's husband had to prepare the way, and find out where it would be safe for them to go, before he ventured to take his little family, his wife and baby Susan, into a strange land. And just at this time he felt pretty certain that while the bishop was undoubtedly watching Catherine's movements constantly, he would not make his move against

her until she had the money which Bertie was ostensibly travelling to recover for her. Gardiner wanted money. Catherine with the Duke of Suffolk's fortune to confiscate would be a much more desirable prize for the bishop to seize than Catherine without it. He would be vigilant in his watch, but he would undoubtedly wait to see the results of Bertie's mission before taking definite action against her. Richard Bertie gambled on that being the case. He had to take some risk, and as it turned out, he was right in the risk he took.

Bertie crossed the seas in June, and Catherine and little Susan stayed in London, with their servants, at the Barbican. It was a long and trying wait for the duchess. There was practically no one whom she could be sure she could trust. Gardiner's spies were all through the city; for all she knew, one of her household servants might be one of the bishop's men. Any false step or ill-considered remark of hers could lead to instant disaster. She knew this, and she curbed both her tongue and her activities while she waited for news from her husband. They were long, hard days for Catherine of Suffolk; they seemed interminable. Summer gave way to autumn and autumn to winter. The days grew shorter and colder; when she got up in the mornings it was still as dark as night, and by mid-afternoon the daylight was going again. But though the daylight was short, Catherine's waking hours seemed never-ending. Smithfield, where heretics were burned, was not very far from the Barbican, and when there was an execution, the heavy air was leaden with smoke, a grim reminder to Catherine of the fate that might lie in wait for her. She spent most of her time with her baby, caring for her and playing with her. At thirty-four years of age, Catherine of Suffolk, who had never in all her life considered

the consequences of anything she might do or say, was undergoing the most rigid self-discipline. Her very life depended upon how she withstood this test – hers, her husband's and her baby's. So she stayed in or near her house with her child, quietly and, to all appearances, calmly and happily, and she waited.

Finally December was almost spent. How the news that the end of her waiting was at hand came to the duchess, or by what means, is not recorded. Foxe says that when Richard Bertie left his wife in June, the date of her own departure was agreed upon between them. But this seems slightly improbable. Bertie could not have known in advance what he could find, or how long it would take him. And he would wish his wife not to delay her departure from England one minute longer than necessary, certainly not to wait for a date arbitrarily set in advance. Possibly Bertie sent word to the duchess by one Robert Cranwell, whom Foxe describes as 'an old gentleman' especially provided by Bertie for the purpose of helping his wife's escape, and the only single person who was aware of her intended flight.

On the last day of the old year, Catherine made her simple preparations for her journey. Quietly, so as not to arouse the suspicions of her household, she made bundles of the bare necessities of life, a change of clothing and some blankets, and warm garments for her child. Her task accomplished, she went to bed, but not to sleep. She was joyful at the prospect of seeing her husband again, but full of apprehension as she thought of the difficulties and dangers that lay ahead of her. She had to tell a few of her servants that they must be ready betimes in the morning. The Duchess of Suffolk had never moved without a retinue; half a dozen servitors seemed a very small company for such a trip as she contemplated.

Foxe describes those she took with her as 'the meanest of her servants, for she doubted the best would not adventure that fortune with her. They were in number four men, one a Greek born, which was a rider of horses, another a joiner, the third a brewer, the fourth a fool, one of the kitchen, one gentlewoman and a laundress.'

It was between four and five o'clock on New Year's morning, 1555, when the duchess, with her baby daughter in her arms and accompanied by her little band, stepped out of the door of the Barbican and into the dark cold of the forecourt, silent at that early hour. They trod quietly, but not quietly enough. As they were going through the outer gate that led to the street, a herald named Atkinson, the keeper of her house and, possibly, one of Gardiner's men, heard a sound and came with a torch in his hand to see what it was about. As he paused in the doorway of the house itself, the duchess, her tiny group with her, slipped through the gate and into the blackness of the London street. In their haste they dropped the 'male' which contained most of the parcels of their necessaries, but they dared not stop even long enough to pick it up. Once in the street, the duchess whispered to the others to meet her at Lion Key, between London Bridge and Billingsgate, and quickly and silently the little company scattered, only the two women staying with their mistress and her child. The herald had hesitated, to look and see what the parcels were, and this gave Catherine the moment she needed to slip into the shelter of the gate of Charterhouse, near by. So when the herald came through the gateway of the Barbican, all that met his eyes, straining to see through the smoky darkness, all that the light of his torch showed as he turned it one way and the other, was the black emptiness of the London street on a chill, foggy morning. Unconvinced

but unable to do anything, he turned back and fell to ransacking the parcels to see if they might give him any clue as to what had happened.

Catherine lost no time. With her sleeping child in her arms and the two women beside her, hurrying to keep up with her, she sped through the cold darkness by Finsbury Fields and through the silent streets leading towards Moorgate, where suddenly, more by accident than any design, they came upon the others of their company, trying to find their way through the black fog. Together they all went on towards the river, until at last Lion Key lay before them, and the barge that would take them down the Thames. The mist lay heavy on the river, thick and impenetrable, so that the bargeman was very reluctant to push off; but finally the persuasiveness of the duchess prevailed, the man gave a shove with his pole and the trip had finally begun.

The trip had begun, but Catherine's danger and troubles had not ended. As soon as day had fairly broken, the Council had been informed of the duchess's flight. Certain of the members promptly went to her house to inventory her goods, and means were immediately devised and set in motion to catch her and prevent her escape.

The barge kept on down the river through the heavy fog. It went slowly, for visibility was extremely limited. Somewhere along the way, the men with the duchess had got separated from her party, and were never heard of again. But the loyal Master Cranwell was at Leigh, well down the river below Tilbury, waiting for her arrival. In Leigh, Cranwell had discovered that her flight was already known, and that agents of the bishop were waiting, on the chance that she might come there. Casting about for some place of safety for Catherine and some way to get her to it, Cranwell

had come upon an old friend, a merchant by the name of Gosling, and had begged him to help. This Gosling was glad to do. He had a married daughter, unknown in the town of Leigh, and when Catherine stepped off the barge, dressed as she was in clothes suitable for a merchant's wife, she was greeted as Mistress White – the daughter's name – and was hustled to Gosling's house for a reunion with her 'father'.

This interlude gave Catherine a chance to catch her breath, and to get some much-needed rest before embarking upon the next, arduous leg of her journey. She rested as well as she could through that day and the next, and busied herself with fixing up some clothing for her baby, for all the child's things were in the parcels that had fallen from their hands and been left behind them. It was not easy for Catherine to relax; she was constantly on the alert for agents of Gardiner, for she knew very well that the bishop would be unrelenting in his pursuit of her. Her mind was far from being at ease, but before it was time for her to set sail from Leigh, her spirits were marvellously revived. Some time before the sailing hour, Richard Bertie, who had got back to England but had, for her protection as well as his own, stayed in hiding from Gardiner's spies, managed to join his wife and baby.[3] Whatever now lay before her, Catherine had the broad shoulders of her husband to support and protect her. Her relief, as well as her joy at seeing him, was enormous.

They set sail as soon as wind and tide were favourable, and soon the coast-line of England dwindled and vanished behind them as their ship made its way across the channel. But winds can change, and the coast-line of Zeeland had come within their sight when suddenly they realized that instead of growing more distinct, it was fading and receding. To their dismay, they recognized the fact that they were being blown

back, back towards England. And then the wind veered again, and once more they were heading in the right direction. Twice this happened, and the second time they were driven back almost to the point from whence they had started. The little ship had provisions for only a short voyage, and so the captain was obliged to send one of his men ashore for more food and water. This simple seaman was promptly seized upon and questioned, but his guileless answers, to the effect that the only person on board was a mean merchant's wife, for some reason satisfied his questioners, and for the third time the little craft set sail and moved in the direction of the Low Countries.

This time the ship made it. This time the coast-line they longed to reach did not come out of the mist only to recede and disappear; it appeared, a thin line, flat and uncluttered, on the grey horizon, getting ever sharper and clearer, until buildings began to be clearly visible, and finally people moving about. Then the sails began to flutter down, the little ship slid into the harbour; and Catherine of Suffolk, her baby in her arms and her husband at her side, stepped ashore on to the soil of Brabant.

VII

EXILE

THE winds of late January blew sharp and cold over the frozen Low Countries as the duchess and her husband set foot for the first time on this foreign land. In the flat countryside, there was nothing to break the sweep of bitter air blowing off the North Sea, and the wind cut the travellers, freezing faces and hands and whipping the women's skirts about their legs as they walked across the icy ground. The country seemed stark and uninviting, but the gales which buffeted them no longer had the power to blow them back to England and into the waiting hands of Gardiner's men. The steel-grey sea now lay between them and the bishop, and the land on which they stood, however cold and bleak, was a land of promise to the Berties, of safety and security. Whatever might lie ahead of them, discomforts or even perils, they now gave thanks that their difficult sea voyage lay behind them.

Once ashore, the duchess and her women immediately changed their clothing to the costume of Netherland women, with 'hukes' – long, hooded cloaks which enveloped them from head to foot – giving them some protection from the biting cold. Richard Bertie and his family did not linger long near the sea coast. Safe as they felt themselves, Bertie knew that it was still too near to England, too accessible to their enemies. Their ultimate objective was the Hansa town of Wesel, perhaps a hundred miles inland in the duchy of

Cleves (in what is Germany today). A number of Walloons had fled to Wesel to escape religious persecution, and there was a Protestant congregation there. The pastor of the congregation, one Francis Perusell, sometime known as Francis de Rivers, had once been the minister of the French refugee church in London, where he had known the duchess and had received many kindnesses at her hands.

Richard Bertie had written to Master Perusell, telling him of their flight from England and asking him to find a house for them in Wesel, and protection, while keeping their real identity a secret from all except the chief magistrate of the town. The Berties, on leaving the sea coast, made their way inland over the flat country to the little town of Santon,[1] on the edge of the duchy of Cleves, perhaps five miles short of Wesel. There they found lodgings and settled down quietly to await Master Perusell's answer to Richard Bertie's letter. They were safe in Santon, they thought; certainly they were quite secure as compared to their state in England, and they were, they believed, safer than they would have been nearer to the coast and the lanes of travel between England and the Low Countries. They lived in disguise, taking every precaution possible against discovery, and they lived very simply, as people of no consequence, each day thanking God for their safety but each day looking for the word from Master Perusell that would take them to the still greater security of Wesel. From Santon, which stands on a slight rise, only about twenty feet but at that practically the highest land in that part of the country, they could see, on a clear day, the steeple of the church of St Willebrod in Wesel, where they hoped ultimately to be.

Santon was a charming little town, quite near the Rhine, which flowed northward only about a mile to the east. The

houses stood around the square, and dominating all was the great mass, not very long completed, of the collegiate church of St Victor, a magnificent Gothic structure, dwarfing all the other buildings in the town. Its great towers reached upwards, and daily its bells, ringing to call the people to mass or to special services, reminded everyone in the town of the power of Rome. But the people were quiet, friendly folk, who smiled shyly when they saw Catherine or her husband in the streets (not a frequent occurrence, as the Berties kept very much to themselves, going out for an occasional walk with their little girl or doing the necessary errands for a simple existence but otherwise staying close to home). It was an uneventful life, but after the constant fears and dangers of the past year and the long separation from one another, Catherine and Richard Bertie were contented and asked for nothing more than to be able to stay where they were, quiet and unmolested, until such time as they should hear from Master Perusell that they could have a safe home in Wesel.

But their security was short-lived. Before the month of February was past, before the looked-for message had come from Master Perusell, their peace was shattered. Richard Bertie, out in the town on some errand, was approached by a man of Santon with news that put an abrupt end to the comfortable feelings he and Catherine had begun to enjoy. There were, the man told Bertie, those who did not share the belief that he and his wife were the inconsequential little folk they pretended to be. It was being whispered about that they were quite different, that they were in fact persons of importance; and the rumours had reached the ears of Antoine de Perrault, Bishop of Arras and dean of the minster at Santon. The bishop, the townsman warned, was already making his plans to descend upon Bertie and the duchess suddenly, without

warning, to examine them as to their status and their religion.

Richard Bertie listened quietly to what his informant had to say, not daring to show his consternation by so much as a disturbed look or an exclamation. The man might be the friendly human being he appeared to be; he might, on the other hand, be an agent sent to sound Bertie's reaction to his news. Catherine's husband was well aware of the craftiness of their enemies, and he knew that he must never fail to take care lest an unadvised gesture might betray his wife and himself into their hands. He bade the man a courteous good morning and went on his way. Once out of sight, however, he made all possible haste back to his home and the duchess. There was no time to be lost, he realized that; they must leave Santon without delay. He realized also that they dared not do anything which might look to a chance observer as though they were fleeing. They could not leave their house carrying baggage, as if for a journey; they must go unencumbered, taking with them only such bare essentials as could be carried without attracting notice. And where should they go, and to what welcome, if any? Bertie's concern was great, the greater because of his newly acquired knowledge that his wife was with child. She was now thirty-six years old, an advanced age to be carrying a baby in the point of view of those days. Surely it was a monstrous idea for her to set forth into the unknown. But they had no choice; they must go, quickly and quietly, and they must go on foot. And so, that afternoon, as though they meant simply to take a walk in the fresh air, Richard Bertie and his wife, with baby Susan, walked out of the door of their house and down the street of Santon, followed, at a discreet distance, by their two servants. They walked in a leisurely manner so long as they were within the town, as if they were enjoying

the brisk air of the winter afternoon. Once out of the town their pace quickened. They walked eastward, in the direction of Wesel, always towards the towers of the church of St Willebrod. No word had yet come to them from Master Perusell, but they had to take the chance of finding him and of finding a welcome in Wesel. They had nowhere else to go.

The air was damp and raw, threatening rain or snow, as they trudged into the country, but they kept steadily on. They had gone scarcely more than a mile when it began to rain, in a steady, cold downpour that drenched their garments through, chilling them to their very bones. To make matters worse, the rain which felt so cold as it struck them, thawed the frost-hardened ground, turning the icy surface to slush that sucked at their every footstep, making walking all but impossible. Darkness was falling fast, and the rain came down steadily, with no sign of stopping. Bertie sent their two servants to houses as they passed by, to try to hire some kind of wagon for his wife and baby. But none was to be had, and they plodded on, Bertie now carrying the child in his arms while Catherine carried his rapier and cloak for him. At last, in the darkness and close to seven o'clock, they came to the walls of the town of Wesel. It had taken them nearly four hours to travel about five miles through the rain and mud.

Their spirits rose as they walked through the gate in the great walls. They could sense the strength of the fortifications that surrounded the town and they took comfort from the feeling of security given by stone and mortar and from the knowledge that within this town there were many Protestants like themselves. Roman Catholics there were in plenty on the continent of Europe, in near-by France as well as in the Low Countries and in Germany; but surely here behind

these stout walls, in company with others of their own faith, they would be safe from persecution. And so their hearts were lighter as they entered the town. This was not the way they had hoped to come to this haven. They were wet, tired and half frozen, and no one knew of their coming. But they had got there, and they approached the first inn they came to, with a sigh of relief at seeing shelter in sight. They were turned away brusquely. No rooms were available, they were told, and though Bertie offered to pay more than the innkeeper's price, the answer did not change. On they trudged, from one hostel to another, always meeting the same rebuff. The hosts of the inns would barely speak to them. In their drenched and dishevelled condition they presented a sorry picture, and the innkeepers took Bertie for a lance knight – the common foot-soldier of Germany, hated everywhere for his brutality – and Catherine for his woman, and they would have none of them.

It was too much for the duchess. Her baby was shivering in her wet clothes, crying pathetically from cold and hunger; and as Catherine held her close in her arms to try to warm her, her own head drooped over her child and she wept as if her heart would break. A lump rose in Bertie's throat. Was it for this that they had come to this far country, to be hunted like animals, turned out in the cold and rain, hungry, tired and friendless? Catherine's sobs shook her slender body. She had looked forward with such eagerness to their arrival in Wesel; there, she had felt sure, they would find kindness and warmth and asylum. She held her child closer to her, with her free hand clinging to her husband. But try as she would, she could not control her weeping.

Richard Bertie gazed about him, wondering what he could do now to bring some comfort to these two who were so

dear to him. Looming black in the darkness and rain, he saw the outlines of a church. Gently he guided his wife's stumbling feet towards it and into the porch, where he eased her down in a protecting corner.

'Stay thou here,' he told her softly, 'and I will go and find food and fire, and coverings.'

Leaving his wife and child as comfortable as he could make them, Bertie strode out into the dark, unfriendly street, not knowing which way to turn, in which direction to go. In spite of his brave words, he was all but despairing of finding one who would sell him anything; and the first man he approached made him more than ever aware of the difficulties of their predicament. For he could neither understand the man nor make himself understood. With all his linguistic ability in French, Italian and Latin, Bertie had scarcely any Dutch. He went blindly on, meeting with one blank look after another as he tried the languages he knew on the people he met in the rain-swept streets. Finally he found himself once more in the square before the church where his wife and baby awaited him and the comforts he would bring. Slowly and more slowly he approached the church, dreading to tell his half-frozen Catherine that he had not even a bit of straw to put between her and the cold stones of the porch. He walked slowly and sadly, when suddenly a sound made him stop in his tracks. Straining his ears he heard it again coming out of the darkness, the sound of voices, speaking in Latin. Bertie groped his way towards the sound, and found two young Dutch boys talking together in a language which he knew and could speak. He broke in on their conversation, and offered them two stivers (silver coins) if they would take him and his wife and baby to the house of some Walloon. The boys hardly expected anyone to be about on such a night, let

alone offering them silver for what seemed to them such a simple errand. They were astonished, but they waited while Bertie ran up to the porch and got Catherine and Susan, and then they led them, just a little way, to a house, where they left them abruptly and vanished into the darkness, clutching their stivers in their hands. At Bertie's first knock the door was opened, and the shaft of light that came from within disclosed the sorry-looking trio, bedraggled, dirty, shivering.

'What are you,' asked the man in the house, 'who are you and what seek you?'

Bertie answered, 'We are English, and we seek the house of one Master Perusell.'

The man seemed surprised. 'Stay a while,' he said, and turned from the door and went back inside. Bertie heard him talking with someone in an inner room. In less than a minute the man was back, and at his side, staring in disbelief, stood Master Perusell. A minute they stood so, each gazing at the other speechless, when the pastor stretched out his arms to them and drew the three weary waifs out of the rain and cold, into light and warmth and friendliness.

The mistress of the house took the duchess and little Susan with her to her bedroom, where she gave Catherine dry clothing to put on and even found a little dress, belonging to her child, for the baby. Hardly able to speak for gratitude and relief, Catherine dressed herself as the kindly hostess rubbed her child dry and put on her the warm clothing. Together they went downstairs, to find a fire burning, and the cheerful light of candles and a good dinner. Catherine's husband, clean and dry and dressed like herself in warm borrowed clothing, sat near the fire, listening to Master Perusell's story.

That very day, the pastor told them, he had completed the

arrangements for their coming to Wesel, and at the moment when their knock came at the door, he had been telling his friends, with whom he was having supper, about them. The host had been very much surprised when he went to the door and found them standing there, but he had not guessed their true identity. Wet and bedraggled as they were, he had believed, and had so told Master Perusell, that servants of the English folk he had been talking about were even then on the doorstep, looking for him. Of all the houses in Wesel, knowing nothing of what the people they guided really wanted, those two boys had brought Bertie and his family to the one man they sought. It seemed an age since they had left the warmth and comfort of their simple lodging in Santon. But although at first Wesel had been unfriendly and forbidding, they had never dreamed or even dared to hope, when they had had to start out without a message from Master Perusell, how warm and complete would be their final welcome there.

Within a very few days after their arrival, their friend had found a house for them in the town, into which they moved with relief and joy. Gradually the news of who they were got about among the Walloons, and on the next Sunday a preacher in Wesel publicly rebuked the innkeepers, from his pulpit, for their incivility and unkindness to the strangers within their gates, 'discoursing how not only princes sometimes are received in the images of private persons, but angels in the shape of men'. Little by little the fear that had come to be the constant companion of Richard Bertie and Catherine faded, as the people of Wesel made them welcome and as they were able to talk openly about their faith with others of the same persuasion and to worship their God according to their belief. The cold raw winter passed into spring, and

spring became summer, green and lush in the damp, flat country, country which was quite different from their own rolling Lincolnshire but which reminded them, with its tiny streams and patches of green woodland, of the fen country round about Cambridge, and which was beautiful to them because of the friendly atmosphere. Through the summer, as Catherine lived peacefully in Wesel, serenely awaiting the coming of her new baby, the memory of their cold and uncomfortable journey from Santon and of the fears that had dogged their footsteps slipped far into the back of her mind, never quite forgotten but no longer the nightmare it had been.

Catherine's and Richard Bertie's son was born on October 12th. He was baptized in Wesel, probably in the great brown Gothic church of St Willebrod, the same church whose steeple had been a beacon to them in their journey from Santon, in whose porch, only seven months before, Catherine had huddled, unhappy and half frozen, while her husband searched for food and warmth for her and Susan. Now it was all different. They stood there, happy and unafraid, as their little son was christened by Henry Bomelius, the pastor of the church, little Susan at their side gazing wide-eyed up at the ceiling with its intricately ribbed vaulting. A few kind, good friends stood near by as Richard Bertie gave Master Bomelius the baby's name, Peregrine Bertie, chosen for him by his parents because he had been born during their wanderings. This was a happy time for the duchess and her husband; they had each other, they had two beautiful, healthy children and they had freedom, to think and speak and worship according to the dictates of their own consciences. If they thought with sadness and nostalgia of their loved home in England, they thought with ever-increasing gratitude and

affection of their adopted home and of the kind people who had made them a welcome part of their lives. However long they might stay there, they were happy and content.

But once more the storm clouds were gathering over the heads of Catherine of Suffolk and her husband.

Some time during the winter of 1555-6, the blow fell. Queen Mary's ambassador in the Netherlands was Sir John Mason, a practising Catholic and a servant to the queen, but also a friend to the many English who were living in exile in the Low Countries. Mason sent word to Richard Bertie that knowledge had come to him that Lord Paget, one of the queen's Privy Councillors, then in Holland, had invented an errand to the baths near by, that the Duke of Brunswick, with ten ensigns, would shortly pass by Wesel, and that together they planned to intercept and charge Bertie and his wife with heresy. Wesel was no longer a safe place for Catherine and her husband. Once again Richard Bertie was obliged to tell his wife that their period of security was at an end, that they must, as quickly as possible, leave this haven that they had come to love and the friends who had become dear to them both, and again take to the road to escape their persecutors.

They left their comfortable house and the town of Wesel with its friendly folk, sadly and reluctantly, and travelled to a part of Germany known as High Dutchland. This journey took them out of the flat country of Cleves and up the Rhine, through the narrowing river-valley with mountains towering above them on either side, threatening heights with great fortress-castles on top. Who were in those ominous fortresses, were they friendly or antagonistic to the travellers they watched, far below? Bertie and Catherine could not know. It was a long journey and a dangerous one; with two

little children, one a babe in arms, it was difficult and arduous. They were heading for the town of Weinheim in the Palatinate, a place where they knew they would be as safe from their persecutors as they could be anywhere. Otto Heinrich, the Prince Palatine, was a Protestant; he and his brother whom he had succeeded had both been friends of Martin Bucer. It is possible that during his stay in Cambridge, Bucer had told Catherine about the two brothers and their sympathy for the reformed religion. Perhaps that was why Catherine and her husband had decided to make the long and hard trip up the Rhine. Over the mountains as the crow flies, Weinheim is about one hundred and fifty miles from Wesel; it was much farther as they had to travel. They may have gone part of the way by boat, it would have been shorter so, but still slow since they would have been going up river, against the current. However, Richard Bertie and his Catherine were not to be deterred by hardship or fatigue, and finally they reached their goal, where the Prince Palatine took them under his protection and where once more they settled down to live.

The town of Weinheim was east of the Rhine, in the mountains of the Oberwald. It lay in a curve of the mountains, protected from the cold north-east winds, and it had a warm and gentle climate. Citron grew in Weinheim, and even some dwarf palms, but beech trees and occasional oaks reminded the Berties of Lincolnshire. And here and there a field of grain waved on the steep hillsides. The little family settled down in a castle high on a hill by the town, a castle with thick walls and stout gates, belonging to the Prince Palatine.[2] They lived there for the better part of a year, and would have been happy to stay for as long as need be. But although they lived as frugally as possible, and Catherine

even sold some of her jewels to get money for the necessities of life, their funds began to dwindle alarmingly, until by the late winter, in 1557, they saw the end of their resources staring them in the face. The situation was a grim one, and they did not know where to turn or what to do. Their prospects looked utterly hopeless, when help came to them from an entirely unexpected source. Letters came from King Sigismund of Poland, the same king who was rumoured to have wanted to marry the duchess some years back, and from the Count Palatine of Vilna, both of whom had been told of their sorry plight by John à Lasco. John à Lasco was the son of a Polish nobleman. Born in 1499, he was reared in the Catholic Church and had been ordained a priest; but as a young man he had come under the influence of Erasmus, and by the year 1540 he had become an active reformer and the pastor of a Protestant congregation in Emden. He spent some time in England, and in 1550 he had been superintendent of the church of foreign Protestants in London. A Lasco was a good friend of Thomas Cranmer and of Martin Bucer; he had visited Bucer in Cambridge and had probably met the duchess there; their zeal for a common cause and their affection for the frail ecclesiastic whom they both loved would have been strong bonds between them. John à Lasco left England for Poland in September of 1553, and though his path and that of the Berties did not actually cross on the Continent, he had heard of their travels, knew of their difficulties and had told Sigismund and the Count Palatine about them. And so the king and the Count Palatine wrote to Bertie and the duchess, offering them hospitality in Poland, a house, lands, sustenance. It was a generous offer, it would mean permanent security for Richard Bertie and his family, exiled from their homeland for how long they could

not foresee. But Poland was far away. It would take weeks, perhaps even months of journeying through strange country to get there; it would be a difficult and hazardous journey with a woman and two small children. And what if they got there and found that King Sigismund had changed his mind?

Bertie hesitated. In spite of their desperate state, he was reluctant to expose his family to the rigours of such a trip. And then he and the duchess talked with one William Barlow, sometime Bishop of Bath and Wells, and now, like themselves, an exile from Catholic England. They promised Barlow a share in the advantage that might come to them if he would go and see the King of Poland, find out if he indeed meant his generous offer and get from him a statement over his royal seal. They gave Barlow what jewels they had left, to give to the king in token of their gratitude for his kindness, and Barlow set forth. Travelling alone, he journeyed swiftly across Germany and into Poland, where, through the mediation of the Count Palatine, he had an audience with King Sigismund, who sent him back to Bertie and the duchess with a formal offer, sealed with his great seal. Barlow delivered the document to Richard Bertie, and told him and his wife of his reception and of what he had seen for himself – that Poland was in fact now largely Protestant, and a place where religious freedom was widespread. Nicholas Radziwell, the Count Palatine, was an ardent Calvinist, who was devoting his energies and his considerable fortune to advancing the cause of Protestantism, and the King of Poland was married to Radziwell's daughter, Barbara. Poland would be a safe place and a congenial atmosphere for such strong Protestants as the duchess and her husband.

And so, for the third time, Richard Bertie and his family took to the road. They left the castle of Weinheim in April,

just about a year from the date of their arrival there, the duchess with the two children and her women servants in a wagon, Bertie with four horsemen riding alongside. There was one other member of the party, a member who in all innocence provided the cause of the first and most dangerous encounter of their whole journey. This was their little dog, a pet spaniel, who sometimes rode in the wagon with the women and children, and sometimes romped along beside it. The little caravan started northward, towards Frankfurt. They had not gone very far when they met a band of horsemen, led by one of the Landgrave's captains. Clearly the captain was spoiling for a fight, and the little dog, playing about, perhaps nipping at the horses' heels, gave him his excuse. The captain and his soldiers rode down upon the travellers, attacking Bertie and his men and even thrusting their boar spears into the wagon in which the duchess and her children and serving-women were riding. Bertie and his horsemen, though far outnumbered, put up a good fight, when, in the midst of the mêlée, the captain's horse was killed under him. It was an easy matter for the captain to get another mount from one of his men, an easy matter, too, to start a rumour that some Walloons had attacked and killed the captain on the road. In spite of the bravery of Bertie and his small band, the fight was going against them. From her place in the wagon, safe now that the captain had discovered that there were only women and children there, Catherine could see how hopeless it was, and that unless they could get help, her husband and all his men would be killed. When she was able to catch Bertie's eye, the duchess motioned him to go and get help as quickly as possible. Whereupon Bertie suddenly wheeled his horse and rode swiftly to the nearest town. But trouble was waiting for him there. The rumour

that the captain had been killed by Bertie had reached the town ahead of him – one of the captain's men had apparently ridden there and spread the tale – and to make matters worse, the captain's brother was in the town and believed that this man who came for help was his brother's slayer. Led by the enraged brother, the townsmen fell upon Bertie. He was one against many, and among the many there was not one who would listen to him. His back was against a wall as he tried desperately to defend himself from the angry crowd, when he spied a ladder leaning against a house, its upper rungs in an open window. Somehow, he never knew how, he managed to reach it, and like a flash he was at the top and inside the building. But he was still far from safe. At any second he knew that his enemies would be inside and upon him, catching him in a hopeless trap. He made his way up a staircase and into a sort of garret at the top of the house, where he defended himself for a time, his 'dagge' in one hand and his rapier in the other, holding his enemies temporarily at arm's length. He was in this state, hard-pressed on all sides, when the burgomaster and another magistrate of the town entered the room. Speaking in Latin, a language which was still far easier for Bertie than Dutch, the magistrate urged him to submit to the law. Bertie knew that he was innocent of the captain's death, that the captain was, in fact, very much alive; he also knew that it was sheer suicide for him to continue alone to try to fight off the enraged and unreasoning townsfolk. And so, the magistrate having promised him protection from the mob, Bertie put himself and his weapons in the magistrate's hands, and was committed to safe custody until his case should be tried.

Bertie realized that he must have help, he knew that without it any trial in this town would be a mockery. Promptly

he wrote letters, which his jailer dispatched for him, to the Landgrave and to the Earl of Erbagh, telling them both what had happened to him and of his wife's present predicament. The Earl of Erbagh lived only eight miles from the town where Bertie was imprisoned, and he had known the Duchess of Suffolk in the past. Immediately upon receiving the letter, he set forth to Bertie's assistance, arriving in the town early the next morning to find there not only Bertie, in safe custody, but also the duchess, who had managed to reach the town in her wagon with her women and children, and who was now trying to help her husband gain his freedom.

To the astonishment and discomfiture of the people, when the earl arrived and met the duchess, he bowed low before her, making the obeisance due to a great lady. The men of the town looked at one another uneasily; the great Earl of Erbagh, before whom they were accustomed to humble themselves, was humbling himself before this woman whom they had treated so badly, whose husband they had attacked, whose children had been in danger at their hands. To make matters worse for them, they had discovered the untruth of the rumour about the Landgrave's captain, and that he had not been killed but was alive and unharmed, and so they had no excuse at all to offer for their treatment of Richard Bertie. Shamefaced and frightened they crept away, but presently came back, trying to ingratiate themselves with the duchess and her husband, begging them not to have them punished for their ill deeds.

Catherine was so much relieved to see her husband safe and sound, and both she and Bertie were so anxious to get on with their journey, that they made no move against the townspeople. It was enough for them that they had each other safe, and that their babies were unharmed. They

thanked God for that, and they thanked the Earl of Erbagh for his courtesy and prompt help; and without further delay they got their caravan on the road again.

They reached Frankfurt without more ado, and from there they had to travel through mountain country for miles before they reached the level land. It was a hard passage, and slow, through strange and rough territory. But at last they came out of the mountains on to the plains of northern Germany, stretching long and far between them and their objective. For days and weeks they made their slow but relatively uneventful way across the vast expanse, until they came into Poland. King Sigismund received them there as honoured guests. He had promised them his protection, which he gave them; but in addition he installed them in a large house, virtually a castle, in the county of Crozan in Samogitia – that part of Poland which lay along the Baltic Sea, now Lithuania. It was a strongly Protestant area, being directly under Prince Radziwell's authority. In all of Poland, however, there was a certain amount of general unrest, and the great concern of the king was to keep the peace in his kingdom and keep it from the horrors of civil and religious strife such as was occurring elsewhere throughout Europe. King Sigismund had no doubt heard about Bertie's business and executive ability, and he knew, from the time when he himself had been in England, of Catherine's many gifts and of the happy way in which she had managed her own large establishment. He invested Richard Bertie with the royal authority, turning over to him and the duchess the government of the province of Samogitia, to rule it in his name for as long as they might live there.

Bertie and his family left the king's presence, with gratitude and anticipation. This was more, much more, than they had

hoped for. Not only would they now be safe from persecution, they would also have an honourable position, where their talents for organization and for intelligent administration would be useful and valuable, and where they would be able to help in the work which meant so much to them both – the spread of Protestantism. Their hearts were light, therefore, as they took their way towards Crozan, in the midst of a country of lakes and fens, and forests of oak trees as tall and magnificent as those of their own home.

This, then, was the end of their journey, a happy and useful and honourable ending for Bertie and his duchess. It was two and a half long years since they had set sail from England. They had been hunted and pursued; they had seen their money dwindle to almost nothing, with no more in sight; they had been cold, hungry and footsore more than once; and, too, they had met kindness, generosity and hospitality. They had had adventures of all sorts, but whatever had happened, they had never lost their courage or their faith in God and in mankind. In the midst of all their trials, Catherine had borne a fine son, a healthy, robust little boy who would one day be one of Queen Elizabeth's favoured courtiers, her 'good Peregrine' she would nickname him; and in the end they had come to a position of honour, responsibility and security, in which they lived, comfortably and happily and usefully, for the remainder of Mary Tudor's Catholic reign in England.

The trials suffered by the duchess and her husband during Queen Mary's reign made an impression which lasted for some years, even after both their deaths. Some time after the year 1588, one Thomas Deloney wrote a ballad on the subject which bore the title, 'The Most Rare and Excellent History of the Duchess of Suffolk and her Husband Richard Bertie's

Calamity', and which was written to be sung to the tune of 'Queen Dido'.[3] Deloney was a silk-weaver by trade, who wrote pamphlets and ballads which had a considerable popular appeal. The ballad lacks literary merit, but the people, good subjects all of Queen Elizabeth, could sing with great feeling of the pitiful or hair-raising experiences caused by the wicked and unfeeling Bonner (the conservative Bishop of London; he was the villain of the ballad rather than Gardiner), and could end in a burst of triumph with the words of the last stanza:

> For when Queen Mary was deceas'd,
> The Duchess home returned again,
> Who was of sorrow quite releas'd
> By Queen Elizabeth's happy reign,
> Whose Godly life and Piety
> We may praise continually.

Still later, early in the seventeenth century, a play about the duchess's experiences was written and produced at the Fortune Theatre in Cripplegate.[4] Stories dealing with the lives of actual people appealed strongly to the populace and when a life contained as much in the way of adventure as did Catherine's, it was almost made to order for the writers of plays and ballads. It is doubtful, however, whether either the play or the verses would ever have appealed very much to Catherine and Richard Bertie.

VIII

HOME PROBLEMS

At dawn on November 17th, 1558, Queen Mary died, and on that same day Parliament proclaimed her half-sister, Elizabeth Tudor, Queen of England. Elizabeth held her first Council meeting three days later, in the hall in the palace at Hatfield. At that meeting, Elizabeth appointed William Cecil, Catherine of Suffolk's old friend, to be her Principal Secretary and a Privy Councillor, saying to him:

> This judgement I have of you that you will not be corrupted by any manner of gift and that you will be faithful to the state; and that without respect of my private will you will give me that counsel which you think best and if you shall know anything necessary to be declared to me of secrecy you shall show it to myself only. And assure yourself I will not fail to keep taciturnity therein and therefore I charge you.

Queen Elizabeth never had any reason to change her judgment of her first minister. He served her, and England, with wisdom and with unswerving loyalty for the next forty years. She could, and did, rail at him on occasion. She could, and sometimes did, refuse to act according to his counsel. But she never doubted his motives. She knew that among all the glittering Court this wise and quiet man was motivated only by what he believed was for her good and for the good of England. He was never the courtier, never

one of her 'favourites', never emotional or self-seeking; he lived for his great love – England – and for England's queen. And although Elizabeth Tudor was often exasperating, contradictory, difficult, capricious, William Cecil recognized her as a great woman and a great queen, and he spent the last forty years of his life helping her to realize her great destiny.

One of the very qualities in William Cecil which made Elizabeth Tudor listen to his counsel and often be guided by it was the quality which provoked Catherine of Suffolk and made her scold him and berate him. He never pushed his own ideas and beliefs beyond the point to which he believed the queen would go. Cecil was a Protestant; he had conformed during Mary's reign, had stayed in England rather than go into exile for his religion. He had gone to mass and had made the outward signs of adherence to Roman Catholicism. Since he had elected to remain in England, he had been obliged to do that to keep his freedom, but he had done it without conviction. He was Protestant, and his wife, Mildred, was an ardent Protestant; and he knew that by birth and background, if for no other reason, Elizabeth would be Protestant. However, he recognized in the queen an inherent liking for the forms and symbols of the old religion and an instinctive distrust of the more radical Puritans, and he realized that if he were to push her too fast or too hard in the direction of nonconformity, the result might easily be merely to strengthen her conservatism. And so he was cautious and discreet, and the queen trusted his judgment and was influenced by it; and Catherine of Suffolk, whose quick tongue and ardent nature made her speak out forcefully for her belief, whether or not always wisely, was annoyed and irritated with him.

Catherine and Richard Bertie heard of Mary's death and of Elizabeth's accession before the end of the year. The duchess

is said to have sent New Year's gifts to the new queen – 'a cushion all over richly embroidered and set with pearls, and the book of Ecclesiasticus, covered with purple velvet garnished and clasped with silver and gilt'. On January 28th she wrote to the queen to felicitate her on her accession:

> The Almighty and everloving God so endow your Majesty with His spirit that it may be said of you as of His prophet David, 'He hath found one after His own heart.' Your Majesty I know well knoweth how most naturally all creatures embrace liberty and fly servitude, but many most specially because God of His foreconceived kindness created him thereunto ... wherefore now is our season if ever any were to say after Zakkery, blessed be the Lord God of Israel which hath visited and delivered your Majesty, and by you us, His and your miserable afflicted subjects. For if the Israelites found joy in their Deborah, how much more we English in our Elizabeth ... First your Majesty hath great cause to praise God that it pleased Him to appoint you the means whereby He showeth forth His great mercy ... It is comfort ... to all your subjects that you do the will of Him that hath raised you up spite of His and your enemies ... And though I have my portion of gladness equal with the rest, yet I can not choose but increase it with remembrance of your gracious goodness towards me in times past, in the hope of continuance of the same in time to come. Only I greatly wait and pray to the Almighty to consummate this consolation, giving me a prosperous journey, and rejoice personally to see your Majesty and to rejoice together with my countryfolk and to sing our songs to the Lord in our native land.[1]

Catherine of Suffolk did not return to England until late in the spring of 1559, and before she came home she got news from England which was disturbing to her forthright and strongly Protestant nature, news that seemed to indicate that Protestantism was not being pushed forward in England with the single-minded vigour that she wished for and expected. On March 4th she wrote to William Cecil, in answer to a letter from him or from his wife, Lady Mildred. One wishes that letter had been preserved; as it is, one can only guess at what it must have said from the duchess's answer:

> The hand within the letter seemeth to be my Lady your wife's, the superscription Sir William Cecil's; but howsoever it be it is all one, yea, and so I would to God all our whole nation were likewise one in Jesus Christ as behooveth. Nay, if there be but eleven about her Majesty's person that savor one thing in Him she is happy and the whole realm. But alack, the report is otherwise, which is an intolerable heaviness to such as love God and her; yea, and that such as should rather be spurred holdeth her Majesty of her own good inclination, running most back, among which you are specially named. Wherefore, for the love I bear you I cannot forbear to write it; and if it shall please you to heed a simple woman's mind. Undoubtedly the greatest wisdom is not to be too wise, which, of all others, you should by experience chieflyest know. For if there were anything whereby that good duke, your old master, deserved and felt the heavy stroke of God, what is there else whereof men may accuse him but only that when God had placed him to set forth His glory (which yet of

himself he was always ready to do) but being still plucked by the sleeve of [by] worldly friends, for this worldly respect or that, in fine gave over his hot zeal to set forth God's true religion as he had most nobly begun, and turning him to follow such worldly devices, you can as well as I tell what came of it: the duke lost all that he sought to keep, with his head to boot, and his counsellors slipped their collars, turned their coats and hath served since to play their parts in many other matters. But [to] beware in time is good, for though God wink at them He sleepeth not and will undoubtedly at length pay such turncoats home. Wherefore I am forced to say with the prophet Elie, how long halt ye between two opinions? ... If the Mass be good, tarry not to follow it nor take from it no part of that honour which the last queen, with her notable stoutness, brought it to and left in (wherein she deserved immortal praise seeing she was so persuaded that it was good) but if you be not so persuaded, alas, who should move the Queen's Majesty to honour it with her presence, or any of her counsellors? Well, it is so reported here that her Majesty tarried but the Gospel and so departed. I pray God that no part of that report were true, for in conscience there is few of you that can excuse yourselves but that you know there is no part of it good after that sort as they use it; for the very Gospel there read is unprofitable or rather an occasion of falling to the multitude which, hearing it and not understanding it, taketh it rather for some holy charm than any other thing. Saints' faces may in Lent be covered (and it were good they were always so) but where Christ is He is bare faced, and specially where He hath openly preached at noon days ... To

build surely is first to lay the sure cornerstone, today and not tomorrow; there is no exception by man's law that may serve against God's.

There is no fear of innovation in restoring old good laws and repealing new evil, but it is to be feared men have so long worn the Gospel slopewise that they will not gladly have it again straight to their legs. Christ's plain coat without a seam is fairer to the older eyes than all the jaggs of Germany; this I say for that it is also said here that certain Dutchers should commend to us the confession of Augsberg as they did to the Poles, where it was answered by a wise counsellor [that] neither Augsberg neither Rome were their ruler but Christ, who hath left His Gospel behind Him a rule sufficient and only to be followed. Thus write I after my old manner, which if I persuade you, take it as thankfully and friendly as I mean it; then I will say to you as my father Latimer was wont to say to me, I will be bold to write to you another time as I hear and what I think; and if not I shall hold my peace and pray God amend it to Him. With my hearty prayer that He will so assist you with His grace that you may the first and only seek Him as His eldest and chosen vessel. And so I leave both you and your wife, resting as ready to do you both pleasure if I were able as willing to serve you. With my hearty commendations, from our house of Crossen, the fourth of March.

So far yours as you are God's.[2]

There was no temporizing about Catherine of Suffolk. She knew what she believed and she stood, frankly and without equivocation, for her belief. She could never understand

the attitude of those who felt that a little was better than nothing, those who made haste slowly, looking at both sides of the question and proceeding with caution. While diametrically opposed to Mary's belief, Catherine could understand the Catholic queen's forthright procedure in matters religious, could understand and even commend it, because Mary was acting according to what she really believed. Elizabeth was something else again. By birth and by all the circumstances of her youth she was committed to Protestantism; from the Roman Catholic point of view she was a bastard, unfit and unsuitable to be the Queen of England. During Mary's reign, she had become a symbol of the reformed religion to all those whose sympathies lay in that direction; she had conformed, to be sure, had accepted Mary's establishment; but so, too, had all the Protestant gentry who had not fled overseas. In Mary's reign, to fail to conform was to court certain disaster. But when Elizabeth came to the throne of England, the English Protestants rejoiced, and the more zealous ones looked forward to strong and immediate support from their queen. When they saw that Elizabeth Tudor's Protestantism was not so strong or so outspoken as they had expected, people like Catherine of Suffolk were bitterly disappointed.

Elizabeth chose for her councillors men who leaned towards the Protestant position. They were, for the most part, men like William Cecil, who had accepted and conformed to Catholicism under Mary. Although they were Protestants, they were not zealots, not ardent Puritans, but anti-Roman, anti-Spanish, anti anything that was not pure English. What had rankled most in the minds of a great many Englishmen had been not so much Mary's way of worshipping her God as her Spanish marriage, her deference to

persons and forces not English – to Spain, to Rome, to foreigners. Elizabeth Tudor was as English as the land itself. And she surrounded herself with men who were equally English. Protestants themselves, her advisers recognized, as did the queen, that her best and most dependable friends were Protestants, both at home and abroad. But they recommended caution. In a document entitled *The Distresses of the Commonwealth*, endorsed A. Waad (Armagail Waad, a Privy Councillor in Edward's reign), the writer said:

> It requireth great cunning and circumspection ... to reform religion ... so would I wish that you would proceed to the reformation having respect to quiet at home, the affairs you have on hand with foreign princes, the greatness of the pope and how dangerous it is to make alteration in religion, specially in the beginning of a prince's reign. Glasses with small necks, if you pour into them any liquor suddenly or violently, will not be so filled ... Howbeit, if you instill water into them by a little and little they are soon replenished.[3]

This was the position taken by the queen's advisers, however strongly they might feel personally. Even as staunch a Protestant as Nicholas Throgmorton, a man whose sympathy for the reformed religion was clear-cut and strong, recommended caution. They all recognized the number and complexity of the problems facing the young queen; they realized that her problems, both at home and abroad, would be still further complicated if, at the very outset of her reign, she should take too strong a stand for immediate overthrow of the old religion in favour of the new.

Catherine of Suffolk was dismayed. With her own forth-

rightness and singleness of purpose, she had assumed that when Elizabeth came to the throne, Protestantism would be established instantly, overnight as it were; that the mass would be immediately abolished, along with the confessional and all the trappings of popery. When this did not happen, she was shocked and astonished. Catherine had all the zeal of which the most ardent missionary is made. It was impossible for her to see that the ordinary people in England, the yeomen and their families, found comfort in the old forms, in the ritual of the service, the priest in his familiar vestments who christened them and married and buried them; she could not see that these people were not concerned about a pope in Rome or what he stood for, but that to take from them, abruptly, the forms, the outward and visible signs, to which they were accustomed, could cause great distress and even perhaps civil disturbance. So much for home. As for the foreign problem, the Pope, and relations with Spain and with France, these gave Catherine not a moment's concern. She saw life in clear, unshaded blacks and whites, never in greys. For her, what was right was to be supported, fought for and established without hesitation or delay; what was wrong was to be done away with equally promptly. She could never understand or condone what seemed to her to be the irresolute position of the queen's Councillors; she could neither understand nor remain quiet at the attitude of her old friend, William Cecil – an attitude which she regarded as shockingly hesitant and for which she rebuked him sharply. Her rebukes were not altogether deserved. Cecil worked hard for the Elizabethan religious settlement, he spent time and energy on the establishment of the English Church. But he knew the problems confronting England, and he knew his royal mistress, her brilliance and

ability, her stubbornness and waywardness. He recognized also the strong vein of orthodoxy in Protestant Elizabeth Tudor, and the fact that too great pressure on her to lean to the left could quite easily cause her to lean strongly to the right. Elizabeth never in her life quite trusted the zealots or the radical Protestants; nor did she like or approve of their forms of worship. For one thing, they were far too casual for her. She could not approve of a clergyman marrying, or living as other men lived; and as for the lack of vestments, or the democratic way in which the churches were governed – she neither could nor wished to understand such procedures. However, Elizabeth never did swing dangerously far to the right, and this was in no small part due to the wise and temporate counsel and to the restraint of her minister and principal secretary, William Cecil.

* * *

Catherine and Richard Bertie and their children came home to England in the summer of 1559. On August 2nd of that year, letters of denization were passed for their young son, Peregrine,[4] and at about the same time, the queen issued a warrant to the Lord Treasurer and the Barons of the Exchequer to release Catherine Duchess of Suffolk and Richard Bertie, her husband, from all payments on account of lands, etc., seized by Queen Mary, and to restore to them all their lands, goods and other possessions.[5] Catherine and her husband were not homeless, therefore, nor were they saddled with debts to the Crown upon their return to their homeland. And so, after more than four years of exile, Catherine came home to Grimsthorpe, the place she loved better than any other in the world.

Many changes had taken place in England during the years of Catherine's exile, changes in her own family and among her close friends. Her greatest loss was of course her dear friend, Hugh Latimer, who had been in prison when she left England and had finally been burned for heresy in the autumn of 1555. Then, Catherine's stepdaughter, Frances, the wife of Henry Grey (who had been named Duke of Suffolk in 1551 and had been executed in 1554 for his complicity in the Lady Jane Grey plot), had married her Master of the Horse, Adrian Stokes, shortly after her husband's death. Frances was unwell at the time of her stepmother's return to England. She died the following November, and Catherine was the chief mourner at her funeral on December 3rd, 1559. Frances had had three daughters; the eldest, the Lady Jane Grey, had been beheaded before Catherine had left the country, but the two younger daughters, Lady Catherine and Lady Mary, had lived on at Court, where they were maids of honour to the queen when Catherine came home to England. They were not popular with Elizabeth. Possibly the fact that Elizabeth's father, as well as her brother, had designated the descendants of Henry's sister Mary as successors to the throne after Henry's own daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, had much to do with Elizabeth's antipathy towards these two young women who were Mary's granddaughters and direct descendants. However, the relationship was amicable, on the surface at least, until the summer of 1561, when it became very obvious that Lady Catherine was pregnant. She had married, secretly, the young Earl of Hertford, son of the Lord Protector Somerset. They had been in love for some time, and they had hoped to get the queen's consent to their marriage, in 1559, through the intervention of Lady Catherine's mother. But Frances's

illness made it impossible for her to intercede for them, and with her death they had to look elsewhere for help. There is a story, no doubt true, that the young people turned to Catherine of Suffolk when it became impossible for Frances to assist them. The duchess, according to the story, was sympathetic, but emphasized the necessity of obtaining the queen's consent before any marriage could take place. A letter was prepared, and approved by the duchess, but at the last moment Hertford lost his courage and did not deliver the letter to the queen, and the young couple were married in secret. If in fact Lady Catherine and Hertford did go to the duchess for help, she would certainly have insisted that they must get Queen Elizabeth's approval to any marriage. Catherine of Suffolk had only recently returned to England. She may not yet have realized Elizabeth's antipathy to the descendants of her aunt Mary of Suffolk, but the duchess was very well aware of the fact that by an Act of 1536 it was treason for one of the blood royal to marry without the consent of the sovereign, and she would never have been a party to any secret marriage for Catherine Grey.

Young Hertford and Lady Catherine Grey were married in November or December of 1560, and late the following spring, Hertford went to Paris in the company of William Cecil's son, Thomas. Not long after he had left the country his bride's pregnancy became a matter of comment, and the queen learned of their marriage. Elizabeth was outraged. She clapped Lady Catherine into the Tower and her husband after her, as soon as he got back to England, about a month later. By early September, both young people were prisoners in the Tower and there, on the 24th, their first child, a son, Edward, was born. The news of his birth infuriated the queen still further. Orders were given that there was to be no

contact at all between Lady Catherine and her husband; but the orders were not carried out, for a year and a half later, still in the Tower, Lady Catherine gave birth to a second son, Thomas. This was almost the end of any contact between the young couple. On the 21st of the following August, 1564, the queen gave orders that, because of the plague in London, they should both be removed, the Lady Catherine to the custody of her uncle, Lord John Grey, in Pirgo, Essex, and Hertford to his mother's house at Hanworth in Middlesex. The Lady Catherine and her husband never saw one another again. Upon the death of Lord John Grey, Catherine was sent to a succession of custodians; she died in the house of Sir William Hopton in January of 1568. After her death, her husband no longer constituted a threat to the throne, and he was released.

Only a short time, therefore, after her return to her homeland, Catherine of Suffolk had to see a second grandchild imprisoned. They were not of her blood, the Grey sisters, but she had watched them grow up into womanhood, they were dear to her and their fate was important to the duchess. Death had intervened to spare Frances Brandon from seeing a second daughter sent to the Tower, but Catherine of Suffolk had to watch while all three of the granddaughters of her husband, the duke, were publicly disgraced.

Lady Mary, the third of the daughters, touched Catherine's own life most closely, although Mary herself was probably less close to the duchess than either of her sisters had been, certainly less close than the Lady Jane had been. In 1565, the Lady Mary Grey was still one of the queen's maids in waiting. In August of that year it became known that she had been secretly married to Thomas Keys, the queen's sergeant porter. It was a strange match; Keys, a widower with several

children, was a huge man – he had been chosen for his place because of his immense size – while Lady Mary was so tiny as to seem almost dwarf-like. Sir William Cecil, writing to Sir Thomas Smith on August 21st, said:

> Here is an unhappy chance and monstrous. The sergeant porter, being the biggest gentleman in the Court, hath married secretly the Lady Mary Grey, the least of all the Court. They are committed to several prisons. The offence is very great.

Once again Elizabeth was infuriated. Moreover, she was not going to take any chances by sending the young couple to the Tower and having them have children there. She sent Thomas Keys promptly to the Fleet, the prison between Ludgate Hill and Fleet Street. For some reason, however, Lady Mary was not put in prison at all, but was placed in the custody of William Hawtrey at Chequers, in Buckinghamshire. She stayed there for two years, at the end of which time she was transferred to the custody of Catherine of Suffolk.

The change took place in August of 1567. This was a charge which the duchess did not seek, and one which caused her considerable embarrassment and trouble. Lady Mary, in pitiful condition, was delivered into Catherine's care at the Minories, a London house which had belonged to Lady Mary's sister Catherine. On August 9th, from Greenwich, the duchess wrote a desperate letter to Sir William Cecil, begging his help in the problem:

> According to the Queen's commandment, on Friday at night last, Mr. Hawtrey brought my Lady Mary to the

Minories to me even as I was appointed to have gone to Grimsthorpe ... The truth is, I am so unprovided of stuff here myself as at the Minories I borrow of my Lady Eleanor and here of Mistress Sheffield; for all the stuff that I had left me when I came from the other side of the sea, and all that I have since provided for and gotten together will not sufficiently furnish our houses in Lincolnshire ... I was fain to declare the same lack of stuff to Mr. Hawtrey, praying that my Lady's stuff might come before her, for the dressing up of her chamber. But would God you had seen what stuff it is! He before told me that she occupied his and none of her own, and now I see it I believe him well. I am sorry that I am not so well stowed for her as he was, but am compelled to borrow it from my friends in the town. She hath nothing but an old livery feather bed, all too torn and full of patches, without either bolster or counterpane but two old pillows, the one longer than the other, an old quilt of silk so torn as the cotton of it comes out, such a little pitious canopy of red sarsonet as were scant good enough to hang over some secret stool, and two little pieces of old, old hangings, both of them not seven yards broad. Wherefore I pray you heartily consider of this, and if you shall think it meet, be a mean for her to the Queen's Majesty that she might have the furniture of one chamber for herself and her maid, and she and I will play the good housewifes and make shift with her old bed for her man. Also I would if I durst beg further some old silver pots to fetch her drink in, and two little cups to drink in, one for beer another for wine. A basin and an ewer I fear were too much, but all these things she lacks and were meet she had, and hath

nothing in this world. And truly, if I were able to give it her, she should never trouble her Majesty for it; but look ye, what it shall please her Majesty to appoint for her shall be always ready to be delivered in as good case as by her wearing of it, it shall be left, whensoever it shall please her Majesty to call for it. I hope she will do well hereafter, for notwithstanding that I am sure she is now glad to be with me, yet I assure you she is otherwise, not only in conscience but in very deed, so sad and ashamed of her fault (I think it is because she saw me not since before) so that I am not yet sure she can get her to eat, in all that she hath eaten now these two days not so much as a chicken's leg. She makes me even afraid of [for] her, and therefore I will be the gladder for them. I think a little comfort would do well.[6]

It was a pathetic letter, a pitiful situation. There is no record of how Cecil responded to the duchess's request, or whether he was able to induce the queen to contribute anything for poor little Lady Mary's comfort. Elizabeth's attitude towards both of the sisters had been far from friendly, even when they were living in Court as her maids in waiting. When they flouted her authority and married without her consent, her anger was very great indeed, and she wished only to have them shut up where they could do no harm or inconvenience to her or to anyone, always excepting the inconvenience to their custodians. In any case, Lady Mary lived in the custody of the duchess for the next two years; in 1569 she was removed to the charge of Sir Thomas Gresham, who also wrote periodic letters to Cecil asking to be relieved of the burden. She and her husband were never allowed to see one another again. Keys died in

1571, and Lady Mary in 1578. Her life, and the lives of her sisters, had been pitiful ones, and Catherine of Suffolk, although she felt ill equipped to take any responsibility for upkeep, was nevertheless sad at the thought of the three granddaughters of her first husband.

IX

GRIMSTHORPE

AFTER their return from overseas, Catherine of Suffolk and her husband maintained two homes in England, Grimsthorpe in Lincolnshire, and the Barbican, later called Willoughby House, in London. There were also smaller places, like Eresby near Spilsby in the eastern part of the county of Lincoln, which had come to Catherine as part of her inheritance from her father and which they kept up and visited occasionally; but Grimsthorpe and the Barbican were the places where they lived. They stayed in London for part of the winter months, or when they had to be there for one reason or another, and at times one or both of them stayed for a while at Court at Greenwich, but for the most part, from early spring to late autumn, they were in the country, and usually they managed to be there for Christmas.

Grimsthorpe was still the place the duchess loved best of all. Sadness had been her companion there, and joy too. There she had spent the dark days after the death of her two sons, Henry and Charles Brandon, and there she had married her second husband, Richard Bertie. The house was full of associations and memories. Henry VIII had visited there, walked in the gardens, held Privy Council meetings in the great hall; Latimer had preached in the private chapel his great sermons on the Lord's Prayer, had paced up and down the long passages, the duchess at his side, talking with her

about the religion and the belief that had come to be so vital a part of her life. Her young boys, Henry and Charles, had romped through the great house and played under the tall oak trees in the park as her two younger children, Peregrine and Susan, were now doing; and not too far away for visiting back and forth were good friends: the Cecils and the Mildmays a few miles south, the Rutlands a little to the north-west, and others round about. Life at Grimsthorpe was pleasant and peaceful for Catherine, with family and friends, and with the country folk around her, loving and respecting her. She had spent much time among these people, back in Edward's reign, talking with them about the New Religion, seeing to it that the country folk were ministered to, that each little church had its own English Bible, that the people were taught the Gospel and the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, not in Latin but in their own language. Catherine was happy to be back in this county that she loved, where, given her choice, she would always stay.

The Berties lived comfortably, in considerable state. The household was a large one: account books which included virtually every aspect of their life were kept, and those which survive, covering a period of about two years, give a picture of a noble family living in the country pleasantly and easily. The books[1] begin:

> Such as daily remain in the household of the right worshipful Master Richard Bertie, Esquire, and the right honourable Lady Catherine duchess of Suffolk, his wife, hereafter followeth, with their quarterly wages. Anno 1560.
>
> My Master
> My Lady's Grace

The Lady Elinor (daughter of the duke of Suffolk)[2]
Master Peregrine
Mistress Susan.

Then come a number of women's names, probably the waiting-women of the household, Mrs Turpine, Mrs Mary Chamberlain, Mrs Jane Whittington, Mrs Anne Clark, Mrs Dorothy Turke, Mrs Ashby, Mrs Mary Hall, little Frances, Ann Cannock, Mrs Alice Hatch. Except for little Frances and Ann Cannock, probably children of members of the household, all of these women were paid 13s. 4d. the quarter, which appears to have been about the average wage.

Mr Coverdale, the preacher (he may have been a relative of Miles Coverdale, the translator of the Bible), got £5 the quarter; the cofferer, i.e. treasurer, got 25s. Mr Naunton, Master of the Horse, was paid 13s. 4d., as were the gentlemen ushers, the gentlemen waiters, the clerk of the kitchen, the clerk of provisions. The yeomen of the cellar, the butler, the pantler, the yeomen of the wardrobe, all got 10s. the quarter. Two cooks were paid 25s. each, and grooms of the table received 15s. One gardener was paid 14s. 4d., while two were paid 15s. each. The number of the household listed, exclusive of the family, comes to one hundred.

After the list of personnel, the accounts are divided into categories, starting in October of 1560. The first heading is 'The Wardrobe of Robes', and includes such entries as:

October, 1560.
To my Lady's Grace, for a winter gown in the allowance of a bill signed with her own hand £5. 13s.
For bombassy [padding] for my Master's satin doublet 12s.

To Anthony Berwick for so much money by him paid for 5 yards of frysian for my Master's jerkin and slippers, at 2s. the yard 10s.

April, 1561.

10 ounces of Granado silk for my Master's shirts, 24s. 8d.

February, 1562.

A pair of Valencia gloves for my Master 10d.

A hat of thrummed silk, garnished, and a band of gold, for my master at his coming to Grimsthorpe, 18s.

In November of 1561 there was an item of £28 'for silks taken by my Master according to a bill in my Master's hand'; and in December, material for 'a black velvet gown for her Grace', cost £5. In January, 1562, the duchess paid 7s. for 'fine Holland for ruffs and borders for my Master's shirts'. And so it went. Bertie and Catherine dressed well – Bertie especially appears to have been very particular about his dress. The finest materials, silk, satin and velvet, Holland linen and sheer lawn, went into their clothes; soft furs kept them warm in winter, sable and coney and squirrel. Little Susan had a dress of crimson satin, and a caul of gold work held her hair.

There were occasions, once in a while, when they paid only part of a bill at one time, as in November 1561, when they paid to Mr Bland, a skinner, £14, 'in part' for furs for a gown for Richard Bertie; and again in June of 1562, when they paid Clement Newce, a mercer, £60, in part payment of a bill of £178. 7s. 6d., for 'sundry silks ... for my Master, her Grace, the children and their servants'. But this did not happen often, and there is no reason to believe that Bertie and the duchess did not pay their bills, or that they were really hard pressed to do so. The expenses for clothes were

heavy, however. In addition to their own apparel and their children's, there was clothing or livery for the members of the household, for which the Berties of course had to pay. In April 1561, the women of the household, Mrs Turpine, Mrs Mary Chamberlain and the rest, eight in all, were paid a total of £6. 2s. 8d. 'for velvet to gard [trim] their livery gowns'; in March 1562, the sum of £3 was paid for Mr Coverdale's livery. Such items run all through the accounts.

Shoes were a recurrent expense, and hose. Sixteenth-century children were no different from their twentieth-century brothers and sisters in their propensity for wearing out or outgrowing shoes and stockings, and Catherine and Richard Bertie bought footwear, as well as all other clothing, not only for their own two active children, but also for the 'children of honour', nine boys and one little girl, who lived in the household, apparently as companions for Peregrine and Susan in lessons and in play. There are items for shoes practically every month: 'shoes for George Sebastian and George Adams, 20d.' and 'shoes for John Turpin, 7d.'. In March 1561 there were bought 'two pair of shoes for Peregrine, one for Susan, one for Richard Hall, 7d. the pair', and in April Susan had another, better, pair which cost 13d.

The actual making of the clothes was done almost entirely at home, the expenses noted are for materials for gowns, robes, shirts, hose, and there were also items such as thread and buttons, materials for linings – what the modern dressmaker or tailor would call sundries.

The next category in the household accounts is headed 'Wardrobe of Beds'. The best beds, those for the family and probably those for the higher echelon of the household, were featherbeds, of course. These were kept sweet and fluffy by 'driving' – forcing a current of fresh air through the

feathers. One John Bee of Lincoln, and one Richard Thompson, were featherbed drivers, and they, particularly John Bee, were in frequent attendance at Grimsthorpe. The cost for driving a featherbed was about 2s. Now and then an upholsterer would come to make new beds, to sew up the ticks and fill them with feathers. Ticking and feathers were both purchased: one featherbed tick cost 16s. in December 1560. The kitchen servants slept on straw beds, under coverlets of 'Irish rogge' (a coarse frieze), which cost 7d. the yard; nineteen yards of 'white blanket' for coverings for the family cost £10 2s. 9d., or over 10s. the yard. In November 1561, an item appears for 'thirteen mats to lay under beds' at 11d. each. These may have been for the purpose of protecting the sleepers from the chill coming up from the stone floor, or they may have been simply to protect the featherbeds themselves.

Under the heading 'Wardrobe of Beds' there are also such items as rushes for floors, candles and torches (these for the bedrooms; candles also appear later under the heading 'chaundry'), and house-cleaning. In March of 1562, 'cleaning the house at Grimsthorpe' cost 2s. 8d. Obviously those who worked at such menial tasks as scrubbing and cleaning were paid a mere pittance. Grimsthorpe was a huge house, with halls which ran the length of each side of the quadrangle and numberless rooms opening off the long corridors, living rooms, dining rooms, rooms for entertaining on the ground floor, bedrooms and retiring rooms above; the 'forty maids with forty mops' of *Alice in Wonderland* would have to work long and hard to give it a real spring-cleaning.

The next heading, 'Gifts and Rewards', covers a multitude of payments, not only such items as New Year's gifts, and rewards for favours done, but also all kinds of tipping, payment to the many travelling players and musicians who

entertained the Berties and their household, even payment of the doctor who attended members of the household: 'to William Cooke of Stamford, surgeon, when my Lady's Grace was sick the second day, 10s.' and to a 'bone-setter ... for the setting in of two joints which were out in young Jerves' ankle, 3s. 4d.'

The various items listed under this heading of 'Gifts and Rewards', taken all together, give a picture of the pleasant life lived by Catherine and Richard Bertie in the country. Together they rode horseback, along the winding lanes and over the fields, giving a penny for his help to the man who hastened to open a 'gappe' in the hedge for them to pass through. They visited and were visited by their neighbours; in September 1562 they were at the Cecils', where they tipped the servants 6s. 4d.; in September of 1562 they were at the house of Sir Walter Mildmay in Northamptonshire, where Bertie did some hunting (they tipped two keepers 12s. in addition to the 3s. 4d. which they gave to the yeoman of the wardrobe), and from there they went to visit the Earl of Rutland at Belvoir Castle in the lovely wooded county of Leicestershire, where, among the various forms of entertainment provided, there was a man who played on the lute so beautifully that they singled him out for special notice and gave him 6s. when bestowing the customary end-of-visit gratuities (which amounted to 40s.). On the ride back home from Lord Rutland's, they were caught in a sudden late-summer downpour, and stopped in a house on the wayside while Catherine got dried before the fire; they gave the woman of the house 12d. for her hospitality.

The months of December and January were a particularly costly time for gifts, since New Year's Day was the customary time for giving. In December, 1561, for example, they paid

£14. 10s. to one David Suls for a New Year's present for the queen, and 'for extra work and extra gold', because the piece was 'not well wrought', they paid an additional £4. 14s. 8d. And in January 1562, they made still further payments of more than £5 for a gold chain for the same gift. They gave Peregrine and Susan 20s. each for their New Year's gifts, and they gave varying amounts, usually a number of shillings, to the members of the household.

Payments of gifts, or fees, to travelling players and other entertainers went on throughout the year. In the winter-time, the great house had ample space for entertainers, and room not only for the household but for neighbours, too, to come and witness the performances; while in the summer the gardens, with their background of tree trunks and green leaves, made a natural theatre. In summer and in winter when the family was there, there was much gaiety at Grimsthorpe. In January 1561, musicians from Godmanchester (about forty miles away in Huntingdonshire) performed at Grimsthorpe and were paid 20s. Other items in the same month were:

To the players the first day for my Master	10s.
To the players for my Lady's Grace	5s.
To George the trumpeter, for my Master	3s. 4d.
To two violins for my Master	3s. 4d.

In February:

To one which played the hobby horse before my Master and my Lady's Grace	6s. 8d.

In March the waits of Lincoln were given 20d. for their entertainment; in July, a group of travelling players was paid 13s. 4d., and later in the same month, 'Goods, the master of

fence and his company ... played before her Grace' and they also were paid 13s. 4d. In August, puppeteers came, and stayed two nights to perform. And so it went on: in July of 1562, the queen's players performed at Grimsthorpe for 20s., and again the waits of Lincoln came (they entertained the household frequently). In the same month, Mr Naunton, the duchess's Master of the Horse, was married (he may have been a distant kinsman, for in some of her letters the duchess referred to him as 'cousin Naunton'); Bertie and the duchess gave him £6 'to buy a gown of grogram and a doublet of satin against his marriage', and they paid a juggler 10s. for performing at the wedding festivities.

There were gifts, or rewards, too, to people who did small favours, servants of friends who delivered presents, and the like:

To one which brought a fresh salmon in present from Mr. William Sutton 2d.
A poor man who came to the gate which had his house burnt, by my Master's commandment 9d.
To Mr. Goddall's man which brought a basket of pears in present 4d.
To one of Morton in recompense of a cow which the hounds killed 6s.
To a servant of Lord Clinton's which brought a doe in present 5s.
To certain women of Spilsby which bestowed wine and cakes upon Mr. Peregrine and Mistress Susan 12d.
To Mr. Peregrine, Mistress Susan and the rest, by her Grace, to buy them fayrings of a peddler at the gate 2s.

Catherine or Richard Bertie, or their children, often stood as godparents at local christenings, for example:

To the christening of John Persons' child, my Master being godfather by his deputy, to the child, 2s., to the midwife, 6d. 2s. 6d.
To Paske's wife, when my Master christened her child 5s.
To the christening of Mr. Francis Harrington's child by Mistress Susan 3s. 4d.
To the christening of Archibald's child by Mr. Peregrine and Mistress Susan, 24s., and to the nurse and midwife, 6s. 30s.

and so on, one every month or so, throughout the year.

There are certain entries under the heading 'Gifts and Rewards' which shed a somewhat surprising light upon some customs of the day in cases of contagious disease, at least in the households of the gentry. In the winter of 1561-2, when the duchess was in London at the Barbican, she fell ill with smallpox. She cannot have been very ill, for she enjoyed a considerable amount of entertainment during her sickness. She played cards; an entry in another section of the household accounts reads 'To my Lady in single pence, to play at tables in her sickness, by my master's commandment, 12d.' Moreover, visiting players came and performed before her while she was ill: a Mr Rose and his daughter were paid 13s. 6d. for doing so, and a servant of Lord Willoughby (a cousin of the duchess) played and sang for 20d. Apparently quarantine was not too rigidly observed; one wonders how the members of her household and those who came in from outside to entertain her felt about being so close to one with smallpox, and how many of them caught the disease from the duchess. In a letter to Cecil from Paris, in November 1562, Sir Thomas Smith, then ambassador to France, remarked that smallpox had 'vexed England these two or three

years'. Small wonder! Later on in 1562, the queen herself fell ill with it. She could not have caught it from the duchess, who had it a year earlier, but it is scarcely surprising that someone, whether actually suffering with the malady or simply carrying the germs, finally gave it to the queen, who was, as it happens, far more seriously ill than the duchess had been a year before.

Dr Keyns, 'for his pains taken in the sickness of her Grace and Lady Susan', was given a cup 'of silver all gilt' which cost £5. 14s., and for 'ministering medecine to her Grace for the small pox', an Italian was paid 5s.

'Works and Buildings' is the title of the next category in the household accounts. This included glaziers, slaters (for the roofs), carpenters, sawyers, colliers, smiths, fellers of wood for hedging and so forth; in other words, those who repaired the house and kept it in condition. The expenses under this heading varied, month by month, from a minimum of about £9 to a maximum of about £20. It included work at Grimsthorpe, of course, small repairs at Edenham, Eresby and Bellais and quite a bit of work at the Barbican.

As its name implies, 'Husbandry' included sowing and mowing, reaping and winnowing, at Grimsthorpe and at Edenham and Scotelthorpe which adjoined it; making ploughshares and scythes, felling wood for fires, making it into bundles and bringing it in. It included also the care of the cattle, in field and in barn, well and sick. It did not include horses; they came later, under their own heading.

'Necessaries', the next category, seems to have been a sort of catch-all for anything which did not fit easily under any other heading. Under this heading, in January 1561, is the entry: 'To Mr. Coverdale, for Eliot's dictionary, 12s., for four Lilies grammars, 4s., for four Dialogues, 2s. 8d., for

four Aesop's Fables, 2s.' Mr Coverdale, besides being the chaplain, appears to have been tutor to the children. In the same January the sum of 3d. was paid out for 'birch for rods' – when the children at Grimsthorpe were naughty, they were punished in the manner of the time.

There is also an item of 3d. for 'brown paper to stop crenies in the chambers, her Grace being sick', and 2s. for 'meat for the turkey cocks at the Barbican', and 16d. 'for flowers brought to the Court', and other, unrelated, outlays. But the most recurrent payment listed under 'Necessaries' is money used, chiefly by Richard Bertie, for playing cards. Bertie appears to have been an enthusiastic gambler for small stakes. Starting in January 1561:

To my Master at cards the second day at night	2s.
To my Master at cards the third day at night	2s.
To my Master at cards the sixth day afore noon	3s.
To my Master at cards that night	2s.

and so on, throughout the year. Sometimes the entry indicates that Bertie was playing with friends at Grantham or some other neighbouring town, sometimes in London; and occasionally the entry reads 'to my Master at tables with her Grace' (Bertie seems always to have lost to his wife: there is no entry of money to her for playing with him!); but most frequently the entry reads simply, 'to my Master at cards'. These items are more numerous at the holiday season, from Christmas till the end of January, than at other times, although they appear all through the year; but even the children, Peregrine and Susan, were given a few shillings 'to play upon Christmas Day'. These entries for money for card-playing and, in the summer months, for rovers – a sort of archery contest – are particularly interesting in view of the

fact that Richard Bertie and his wife were such strong supporters of a religion which, less than a century later, was so unalterably opposed to any form of card-playing or gambling. But at the beginning, Puritanism was concerned with the Church itself, with promoting a simple form of worship, and with the government of the Church; it was not until later that the Puritans turned their attention to the social activities of the people, and imposed upon their members the sort of austerity associated in most minds with the term Puritanism. Catherine and Richard Bertie were far from austere. Their religion meant everything to them – a warm, loving religion, based upon faith in God and His love. They worked hard among the people of the county to spread the Gospel which meant so much to them, but, sure in their own faith, they never found it necessary to shun the simple pleasures that made their life full and happy.

'Bakehouse and Pantry' included flour, wheat, bread. The items for wheat and yeast occur every month, and almost every month appears 'butter for the baker'. In the country the bread was made on the place, in the bakehouse, while it appears that it may have been bought when the family were in London. Also under this heading come utensils for cooking, and trenchers for the table; one dozen silver-plate trenchers cost £26, and a basin and ewer 'of silver fashion' cost 12s.

Under the heading 'Brewhouse and Butlery' were malt and hops, casks and payments to the cooper; there were strong beer, at 7s. the barrel, double beer at the same price, and small beer for 4s. 6d. a barrel. Beer was bought in large quantities – everyone drank it.

The 'Cellar' was kept stocked with various kinds of wine: claret and Rhenish wine, bitter wormwood wine and sack,

and cordials with exotic names, Hippocras and Jubilate. These were often transported from London to Boston by sea freight, thence overland to Bourne and Grimsthorpe. Frequently it was bought by the tun or by the hogshead, sometimes by the gallon; six gallons and one bottle of wormwood wine cost 10s. 10d. in July of 1561; in August five quarts and one pint of sack came to 2s. 9d. A good deal of wine was drunk, and wine jelly was made; in December 1561, '5 quarts of claret wine to make jelly' cost only 20d. Drinking vessels for the wine, often of pewter, also were listed under the heading of 'cellar'.

'Spicery, Chaundry [place for keeping candles] and Laundry' were gathered together under one heading. The spicery was heady with the odours of ginger and cinnamon, cloves, mace, aniseed, cumin seed, pepper, mostly bought from the grocer in London. Many of these were fairly costly: a pound of cloves cost 11s., cinnamon was not much less, 10s. 6d. a pound; mace was even more, 14s. for a pound, while aniseed and cumin seed were much cheaper, 14d. and 8d. a pound respectively. Ginger and pepper, in the middle of the price range, cost 3s. a pound. Alongside these more exotic herbs, bunches of thyme and verbena, sage and lavender and peppermint, all gathered from the herb gardens at Grimsthorpe, hung in fragrant clusters to dry. In the spicery also were biscuits and comfits, and sometimes marmalade. A bill paid to 'Modie the grocer' in London, for such diverse items as figs and raisins, castile soap and marmalade, in March 1562, came to £21. 19s. 6d. In the Chaundry there were torches and rush lights, candlewick and wax for making candles, rosin, quarriers (large, square candles with a wick in the middle), candle rods and sockets. For the laundry there was soap, castile soap, sweet soap – a barrel cost 50s. – and

grey soap which came to 12d. for four pounds. One item was recurrent every month: washing pantry cloths, thirty-odd dozen of them each month at 3d. the dozen.

The next heading was 'Kitchen'. The first thing which strikes one in this listing is the amount of fish that was consumed: herrings, white fish, ling; fresh fish and salt fish, and salt for salting down fish. In October, 1560, eight hundred salt fish were bought for £66. 13s. 4d., and half a hundred ling for £7; the next January six barrels of white herrings cost 23s. 4d. the barrel, and six barrels of red herrings cost 12s. each. There was also meat, veal and mutton and pork most commonly. The meat was mostly for the Master's table and for the higher members of the household. At the lower levels, fish was the regular fare. The major part of the kitchen expenses was for fish and meat, but not all. Eggs were a recurrent item; they were not bought regularly, but in quantity. In March 1562, for example, 420 eggs were bought at a cost of 5s. 10d.; and now and again oranges were bought, which, surprisingly, were not very costly, 3s. 10d. for four hundred of them. The Berties got their coal in in the spring and early summer, as soon as the roads were in condition for hauling; sixteen loads and twenty-two sacks were delivered at Grimsthorpe from April to June of 1562 (a load of coal was thirty sacks and cost about 20s.). The coal is listed under 'Kitchen' in the accounts, and was probably used exclusively for cooking; in the cold weather, wood fires kept the house as warm as it was ever kept, and added their glow to the flickering light of candles and torches on winter nights.

The duchess and her husband travelled about a good deal. The next section in the accounts is headed 'Journeying', and scarcely a month passed in which one or both of them did not take a trip, whether long or short. They went to visit

friends in other parts of the country, and now and again they went to see others of their manors; in August of 1561, for instance, they travelled to the eastern part of Lincolnshire, to Boston and to Eresby, a manor belonging to the duchess. The cost of this trip was £7. 6s. 4d. But the longest, and most frequent, trip was to London. In December 1560, there appears the entry:

> To Harry Naunton for sums by him laid out for my Master's journey to London £15. 3s. 3d.
> For my Master's return from London to Grimsthorpe £9. 13s.

The trip to London was a long one. When he went alone, Richard Bertie would travel by horseback, and fairly fast; but when the duchess with her train travelled to the city, three days would be spent on the way, with two overnight stops and shorter pauses, every day, for rest and refreshment. From Grimsthorpe through the winding roads between tall trees down to Bourne, the way was over gentle hills, by the fields of Edenham and Scotelthorpe, with sheep grazing in the fields, and stretches of corn, wheat and oats, down into the little town with its narrow street and houses of soft grey stone, in one of which Catherine's good friend, William Cecil, had been born. Upon leaving Bourne, the country quickly became flat; they were coming into the fenlands, country of rich black earth, with fields and clumps of woodland as far as the eye could see. And the eye could see for miles across an expanse of land as level as a table top. They might reach Ermine Street – the North Road built centuries before by the Romans – at Stamford, near William Cecil's country home, Burghley House; or they might go through Peterborough with its great cathedral and come into Ermine

Street just north of the little town of Stilton. At Stilton Catherine would make her first stop, for a rest and a glass of wine, before proceeding to Huntingdon where she would spend her first night. That day she would have journeyed about forty miles. The next morning the party would leave Huntingdon and go on to Royston, where they would stop for dinner and a rest, and then to Puckeridge for the night, some thirty-two miles in all. The last day was the longest, but they would break it more than once, at Hoddesdon and again at Ware for rest and refreshment, and for dinner at Waltham Abbey. This was a long and tiring day, over forty-five miles; but at the end of it the duchess would have arrived at her destination and could rest.

The total cost for overnight stays, meals and refreshments on the way, for Catherine and her train came to £8. 0s. 6d., with an additional charge of 56s. 6d. for the 'rust wagon' with eight persons with it.[3]

While the Barbican was the Berties' London headquarters, now and then they spent time at Court at Greenwich, travelling there by river from London. In June of 1562, there was 'paid for boat hire for my Master and her Grace and their servants, with carriage of stuff, by water and land from London to Greenwich, £3. 7s. 4d.', and 'for the meat of fifteen persons at the Court at Greenwich by the space of twenty days, £3. 10s. 4d'. Whenever she travelled, whether between Grimsthorpe and London, to Court or elsewhere, the duchess moved with an entourage. In November 'the suppers of twenty-four persons at the Swan in Charing Cross which attended upon her Grace at the Court' cost 11s. 4d., and there are numerous other references to her 'train' or to the persons who attended her.

The last heading in the Household Accounts is 'Stable'.

This included all the horses, and the food and equipment for them and their care. In October 1560, there is the entry: 'To Archibald Barnard for a horse if my Master likes him ... £5', and also an item of 8d. 'for frankinsense to smoke sick horses'. In October of 1561, 4s. was paid for 'two crewel reins for gentlewomen', and in December 'a pair of silken reins for my Lady' cost 26s. 8d. The duchess also had a pillion cloth, trimmed with silk fringe, for 30s. Then there were horse-shoes, saddles, straw for litter, grain and bran, visits by the veterinary. In July 1562, the costs for the stable came to £9. 19s. 3d., and they ran to about that sum every month.

Supplies for the kitchen and some typical menus are listed in another, shorter, book,[4] much as a twentieth-century housewife might make a marketing list. But the list was for a heavier diet than the average of today. A list of supplies reads as follows:

beef
mutton
lings
salt fish
white herring
salt herring
veal

capons
cocks
hens
woodcocks
partridges
figs
yeast

butter, fresh and salt.

Another list reads:

beef
mutton
lamb
fallow deer

herons
pigs
butter
chickens

red deer	eggs
veal	salmon pie
capons	porpoise pie
geese	mustard seed

oatmeal.

Certainly this was a high-protein diet!

The tables were listed in order of rank; first the Master's table, then the gentlemen of the household, then the clerks, the yeomen, the porters and the kitchen. Meat was served in variety at the Master's table; one typical menu reads,[5] 'Boiled meat, boiled beef, pigeons, roast veal, rabbit, baked venison'. Less meat and more fish appears at the gentlemen's and clerks' tables, and below that level the fare was almost entirely fish of various kinds. Fish was served at the Master's table, too, of course, but not always, and never exclusively. Oysters, in season, were also served at the Master's table. Butter was served; at dinner it was on the upper tables, at supper on all the tables; it was regular fare in the cold weather, occasional fare in the summer. Apparently fresh butter was a delicacy then as it is today, for the higher tables had it, while those below the clerks were served salt butter. Breakfast was a meal for the children, consisting of eggs and sometimes mutton; it is not mentioned for any of the rest of the household.

Reading these lists and menus, one can hardly wonder at the number of people in the sixteenth century who seemed to be suffering from gout or from other ailments associated with too much of a diet of meat. There is no mention of fresh vegetables or of fruit (except for the occasional oranges, and figs); there is no suggestion that the children were ever told to 'drink your milk', or even that milk was given to

them. Meat and fish and starches, washed down with wine or beer, these were the order of the day, all days.

The Berties lived well, however; they lived well and they took good care of their children and the members of their household, they fed them and clothed them, saw to their well-being, spiritual as well as physical, saw to it that they had pleasure as well as work. It was a large and complicated household to run and to manage, and it was costly, as were many of the households of the gentry. From time to time the duchess made protestations of poverty, but except for her years in exile, she always maintained a large establishment. Unfortunately, no record survives of income, so it is impossible to know what she had to draw on, or what proportion of her income went into the running of her household. But it was Catherine's fortune which made possible the establishment; most if not all of the money was hers. Richard Bertie came from a simple background, with no particular means. In all the pages of the household accounts, none the less, the emphasis is upon the Master, his orders, his expenditures. Even such a small item as the 12d. for the duchess to play cards was 'by my Master's commandment'. There is no question, in the records, as to who was the head of the house; there was no doubt either, one can be sure, in the mind of the woman who lived so happily, whether in Grimsthorpe or the Barbican, who watched over the health and education of her children, who saw to the well-being and the domestic performance of her household – Richard Bertie's loyal and devoted wife, Catherine.

X

SUSAN AND PEREGRINE, AND RICHARD BERTIE

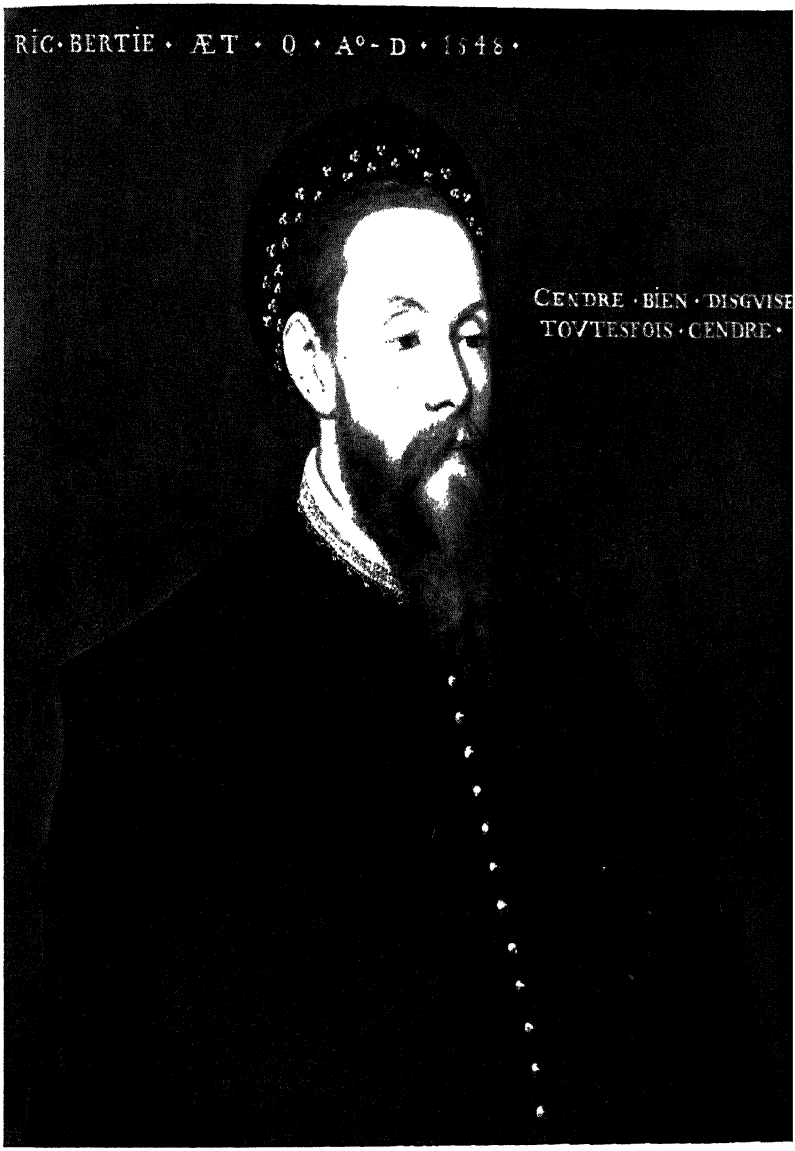
CATHERINE'S husband was an able man, well educated and intelligent. William Cecil recognized this, and in the early autumn of 1563, he tried to draw Richard Bertie into some form of public service. The actual post which Cecil had in mind for Bertie does not appear, but Richard Bertie was not inclined towards public life, and was unable to imagine himself in whatever position Cecil wished him to fill. On October 30th he wrote to Cecil (his letter was on the same page with a note from the duchess to her old friend):

> As your loving commendations much comforted me, so the significations to some public function much encumbered me, yea, so much that if your gravity had not been the better known to me I should have thought it scant seriously written. But seeing you meant it faithfully, I pray you in season correct your error in preferring insufficiency for sufficiency, and to deliver yourself from rebuke and me from shame. My prayer is that I shall find you so friendly and readily hereunto inclined that I shall not need to iterate my suit.[1]

Bertie's reluctance to enter into public life did not, however, entirely prevent him from serving his country. In the same year, 1563, he was elected a representative to Parliament from Lincolnshire, along with William Cecil who also

sat for the county of Lincoln. Bertie sat in the Commons for four years (the second session of the Parliament of 1563 met in 1566), and was a member of the committee on the Succession. Except for the bare fact of his membership on this committee, there is no evidence of any great activity on Bertie's part. The second session of the Parliament was active in many matters; in the question of apparel, of uniformity in ecclesiastical vestments, which the queen favoured and the Puritans opposed, because of the suggestion of 'popishness'; the question of the subsidy; and, of course, the perennial question of the succession. Richard Bertie was a good Puritan, and he would certainly have been staunchly among those who opposed uniformity of vestments; moreover, his presence on the succession committee suggests that he was an active member of the group who were pressing upon the queen the need for her to marry, or at least to designate her successor – pressure which always roused Elizabeth Tudor's wrath.

A certain coolness between the queen on the one hand and Catherine of Suffolk and her husband on the other persisted as long as Catherine and Richard Bertie lived. It seems not improbable that their outspoken Puritanism and their zealous work for the Puritan cause, as well as Richard Bertie's almost certain stand in the queen's Parliament, were factors in developing this coolness. Elizabeth, although Protestant, was definitely conservative. The Puritans' position on practically everything was abhorrent to her. To Catherine of Suffolk and her husband, however, the established Church was no better than a shadow of the Roman Church, and they were never less than outspoken in their fervent support of the Puritan position and their work to promote the Puritan cause. Temperamentally, too, the two women, the queen



Richard Bertie, Esquire

and the duchess, were poles apart. Elizabeth Tudor had learned in the hard school of her girlhood to be cautious and wary; attitudes which appeared to be devious and opportunist were often positions taken in order not to offend those whose good will was important to her and to England. She could be outspoken in her anger, in scolding counsellors or courtiers who displeased her, but for the most part, forthrightness was a luxury she had learned to do without. If she had not been cautious, if she had not, often, paid lip-service to what she did not herself endorse, she could hardly have lived through her sister's reign to become England's queen. The same characteristics which had been her means of self-preservation then, she was now using for the welfare and preservation of England. Charming she could be, and fascinating she certainly was and clever too, but she was the antithesis of the equally charming and witty but completely candid and forthright Duchess of Suffolk, the woman who had never temporized about what she believed and who had never counted the cost of her outspokenness. So Elizabeth Tudor and Catherine of Suffolk could never really be friends, not even in the later part of her life when the years had somewhat tempered the vehemence of Catherine's zealousness. As the queen always mistrusted the zealots, the duchess was disappointed and disillusioned by the subterfuges of the queen's Court and by that which she regarded as weakness in her sovereign – the fact that she did not come out strongly and unequivocally as a champion of Protestantism and an enemy of anything faintly suggesting Catholicism.

In August of 1564, Richard Bertie was one of those who accompanied the queen on her state visit to Cambridge. The visit lasted for five days, with entertainment of the most lavish sort, orations and masques, comedies and tragedies,

provided by the university for the sovereign's pleasure. The queen made a long oration in St Mary's church to the entire university, and the degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon a number of the gentlemen of the Court. Richard Bertie was among the distinguished group receiving the degree, a group which included such men as the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Sussex, Warwick and Oxford, Sir William Cecil and others.

In 1564-5, the dispute between the duchess and her uncle, Sir Christopher Willoughby (now Lord Willoughby of Parham), which had started at the time of Catherine's father's death, cropped up for the last time. It concerned the titles to various manors, which had apparently continued unsettled throughout the thirty-seven years since William Lord Willoughby's death. The dispute was settled amiably enough, for the final depositions read: 'Lord Willoughby resigns all claim in Willoughby, Eresby, Spillsby, Toynton, Steeping and Pinchbeck; and he covenants to make an assurance of these manors to Richard Bertie and Catherine within two years.' And: 'Richard Bertie and Catherine resign all claim in Parham, Orford and Hogsthorpe; and they covenant to make an assurance of these manors to Lord Willoughby within two years.'[2] The matter did not arise again.

Some time during 1568, Richard Bertie composed an answer to John Knox's *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. In his answer, Bertie sets forth the arguments of Knox (whom Bertie calls simply 'author') one by one, and under each one he writes his 'objection'. It is a long document, covering both sides of nine closely written folios,[3] refuting Knox's position, sometimes insisting that Knox was inconsistent and even that he contradicted himself. It was never published, and there is no indication

that it ever came to the attention of the queen. It makes very clear, however, that even though Richard Bertie may have been close to John Knox in his thinking on matters religious, he disagreed categorically with him in his arguments against women rulers. If the queen ever saw it, she must have been approving and gratified, although she might have found its length and rather prolix style somewhat tedious.

Susan Bertie became engaged to Reginald Grey in the year 1570. She was then a girl of about seventeen. It has been suggested that the comparatively humble background of her father stood in the way of an earlier and more brilliant marriage for Catherine and Richard Bertie's daughter. This may have been so, or it may not have been. Although it was older than the marriageable age for many sixteenth-century maidens, seventeen was a good age for Susan and her suitor – to use the duchess's own words of many years earlier – 'to begin their loves without our forcing'. Reginald Grey was the son of Sir Henry Grey, the half-brother of Richard Grey, Earl of Kent. Richard Grey gambled away what money he had, and Reginald's father, because of the smallness of the estate, never assumed the title. But when Reginald Grey became the suitor for her daughter, and married Susan, the duchess promptly set to work to get the title revived and bestowed upon her son-in-law. Though Catherine of Suffolk was opposed to marriages made for position rather than for love, she had a healthy regard for a title, and she intended that her daughter's husband should have his. She started in without delay, approaching the queen directly on the subject and working through her old friend Sir William Cecil, the queen's principal secretary. She began writing to Cecil about the matter on July 29th, 1570, with a letter[4] in which she asked him to deliver a letter from her to the queen, and to

put in his own good word 'for the furtherance of the same'. She pointed out Reginald Grey's right to the title, and that he had never offended in any way but was 'only undone and unabled to receive what he was rightly born to by his forbears' great unthriftiness'. In a postscript to the letter, the duchess said, 'To make Mr. Grey the more able to serve her Majesty, Mr. Bertie gives him a hundred pounds land with his daughter.' And she went on to ask Cecil to keep her request secret from all save the queen, so that if Mr Grey should need to 'set up candles' before others of his friends, he might do so without prejudice to his cause.

Catherine of Suffolk wrote this letter from Wrest, the Greys' home in Bedfordshire. Apparently she spent most of the summer of 1570 visiting there, probably preparing for Susan's marriage, for she wrote twice to Cecil from there in August, about the matter of Reginald Grey's inheritance, and about a second matter which she was beginning to press, namely her desire to have the title of Lord Willoughby (she herself was, of course, the Baroness Willoughby by inheritance from her father) conferred upon Richard Bertie for his lifetime, after his death to revert to their son Peregrine. On September 1st Richard Bertie wrote to Cecil from Wrest, where he had been summoned by his wife's illness. He found her 'somewhat eased', he told Cecil, and 'very much comforted' with Cecil's friendly letters which she gave Bertie to read. Bertie went on to say that he was sending Cecil material relative to his own birth and fitness to bear the title of Lord Willoughby, saying:

> As I have no cause, so I am no wit ashamed of my parents, being free English, neither villains nor traitors. And if I would after the manner of the world bring forth old

> Abbey scrolls for matter of record, I am sure I can reach as far backward as Fitzalan ... the arms I give I received from my father, and they are the same which are mentioned in the scroll that he showed to the heralds and confirmed by Clarentius, the old man that was in King Henry the Eighth's time.[5]

So matters stood when, some time in the autumn or winter of 1570–71, Susan Bertie and Reginald Grey were married. On April 15th, 1571, the duchess wrote again to Cecil, who had been elevated to the peerage as Baron Burghley. She wrote from Grimsthorpe, saying that she understood from her 'son Grey' that he had 'troubled you and the rest of my good Lords with his petition for his right to the earldom of Kent, and that he found you were all very gracious in hearing of his said suit'. The duchess suggested that Reginald Grey himself might not have moved in the matter 'if his friends had not greatly wished him to it, amongst the which I am sure I shall be judged one, and the chiefest doer in it'. Catherine went on to tell Cecil that she had had an audience of the queen in Toddington (in Bedfordshire, the home of Lord Cheyney, where the queen was staying on a progress), at which time the queen 'of her great goodness' had told Catherine

> that for my sake she would credit him baron, in the which as I found myself most bounden to her Majesty, I gave her Majesty most humble thanks, further saying that if it pleased her Majesty to think him worthy of honour, that then I most humbly besought her Majesty that it would please her to restore him to that he was born to, or else to let him remain still as he was, for by any creation he should lose his right in the other. Her Majesty thought he had no further right, and was

> affronted with me that I should so say, but in the end I found her Majesty so gracious to me that she said if it could be found his right, God forbid but he should have it.[6]

The Duchess of Suffolk was not going to settle for a barony when she believed that her son-in-law was entitled to an earldom, and the queen, in spite of her annoyance, could not but admire Catherine for not weakly accepting the lesser title.

Catherine of Suffolk was far from well all through April of 1571; in fact, after her return from her exile, the duchess was plagued with more or less minor illnesses for the remainder of her life. The rigours of her travels overseas had taken their toll of her health, and while she was not really seriously ill, even when she had smallpox, she was never again as robust as she had been before she left England. Late in April she wrote again to Cecil to thank him for sending to ask about her health, 'which I confess is yet not very well, for that I took upon me a greater journey than I was well able to endeavour after my long sickness'.[7] (Toddington was a good sixty-five to seventy miles from Grimsthorpe.) But the duchess was not too unwell to write letters in an effort to further Reginald Grey's suit. On May 12th she wrote to William Cecil again, and once again on the 25th,[8] to tell him that she had had another audience of the queen, when Elizabeth had been most gracious and friendly at the start, but that later on the queen's attitude had changed:

> ... so it was as grievous to me to see her Majesty the Sunday after so strange to me, in which short time I had done nothing neither in word nor deed to offend her Majesty. Surely I must confess her Majesty's strange countenance ... was no little grief to me, and more than

I was able in the sudden to digest, but when with better leisure I remembered that though men might fail me yet God would be merciful to me, it made me of better comfort.

Catherine of Suffolk was not alone in finding the whims and sudden reversals of her queen bewildering and 'grievous'. Her faith in her God, however, was as strong and vital a part of her as ever it had been, and it sustained her even when she was almost completely discouraged, as she was by the queen's attitude.

On June 16th the duchess wrote a long letter to Cecil, in which she raised the question of whether the queen's position in Reginald Grey's suit was caused by her prejudice against herself and her husband and her daughter.

I had thought, my good Lord, never to have been troublesome to you more, but now more occasion serveth me so to do. I would gladly have showed your Lordship such talk as passed between her Majesty and me ... but seeking you in your chamber I could not find you. It pleased her Majesty to say of herself that she would not forego my son's matter. I said for that matter I left it even to God and her Majesty, only this grieved me, that I feared the poor gentleman should fare the worse for my sake. Her Majesty answered most graciously, 'God defend that,' and acknowledged to me that he had good right indeed to his name, for the law was fully with him in it. Marry, her Majesty said she was informed he rather sought the lands in her hands appertaining to the earldom under colour of the name. I said I had for that in his behalf proffered her Majesty a full release of all such lands in her hands ... and also I complained myself

> to be so continuously unjustly reported to her, for she laid to my charge that even I should make the claim of such lands. In the end her Majesty ... withall gave me better words than a subject could look for at their prince's hand. But ... what can we think but for the reward of our faithful heart to her we be recompensed with her great misliking.[9]

The duchess went on to say that it was common gossip, both in and out of Court, that the reason why she was pressing Reginald Grey's suit was in order that her daughter Susan should 'have a high place'. Catherine repudiated any such idea, saying that while it would be only natural for a mother to wish the best of everything for her child, she was not doing any of this for Susan's benefit; in fact, she said, she would personally prefer never to have Susan use the title than to have Reginald Grey lose it because of her.

Catherine's perseverance was rewarded. Later in the year 1571, Reginald Grey assumed the titles of eighth Baron Grey de Ruthvin and fifth Earl of Kent. On January 27th, 1572, Bishop Parkhurst of Norwich, the same John Parkhurst who had been her chaplain thirty years before, wrote to the duchess to congratulate her upon her son-in-law's advancement to the earldom, saying that he wished they had him in Norfolk, 'that having such a one as he is, in commission, we might together travel to reform that is out of frame, to the advancement of God in his glory and the suppressing of Popery in these parts, wherein for want of help I cannot do that I desire'.[10] Reginald Grey had more to commend him to Catherine of Suffolk than simply being her daughter's husband; it is apparent from Parkhurst's letter that he and Susan's mother saw eye to eye in the matter of religion. But

he did not live long to enjoy his honours or to work for the advancement of Protestantism in England; he died within the next three years, and as he and Susan had no children, he was succeeded by his brother Henry. Some eight years after his death his young widow married Sir John Wingfield, a captain in the queen's army in the Low Countries. Wingfield was a friend of Susan's brother, and he and Susan named their only child Peregrine, after him. It was a peculiarly apt name, because the infant, like his uncle, was born in a foreign land, where Susan had gone to follow and be with her soldier husband.

But although Catherine of Suffolk was successful in her efforts on her son-in-law's behalf, she did not succeed in the project which was probably much closer to her own heart. Her husband was never given the right to assume the title of Lord Willoughby. Catherine worked hard for it, William Cecil worked for it; it was debated between commissioners in London and there was some feeling that Bertie should be given the right. The findings of the commissioners were laid before the queen, but the matter got no further. There was support for Bertie's claim, but there was also strong opposition, and the queen was pulled from both sides. In 1572, when she was on a progress, the commissioners laid the claim before Elizabeth, not for the first time. The queen acknowledged Bertie's claim most graciously, but said that she was travelling and that after her return to Westminster she would decide it. Richard Bertie could be gracious too. He sensed the difficulty of the queen's position, he knew that the old nobility were opposed to his use of the title, and he said that he was satisfied, that the reason why he had wished the case to be heard was in order to relieve the queen of the belief that there was no right. From that time on, Bertie did noth-

ing to press his claim. The outcome was a bitter disappointment to Catherine of Suffolk. And Bertie himself would have liked to enjoy the title. But it was not worth the wrangling which he realized was bound to develop, perhaps ending in final denial. And so he held himself satisfied with the queen's statement that she had heard and was considering his claim.

* * *

Peregrine Bertie, Catherine and Richard Bertie's only son, had spent part of his youth in the household of William Cecil. The duchess was anxious for her son to have the advantages which close association with the queen's principal secretary, a man of great wisdom and great influence, could bring to him. It was quite usual in the sixteenth century for a young man to live in the household of one of the distinguished men of the Court. The young Earl of Essex, and Philip Sidney, to mention only two, were both at various times members of Cecil's household, so it was not a reflection upon Peregrine's own father that he was sent from home in this way; he could get a kind of training, living in Cecil's house, which he could not possibly get at home. It is an interesting side-light upon the duchess's boys that whereas the two sons of Charles Brandon, the soldier and courtier, were both lads of outstanding promise in learning and in scholarly pursuits, Peregrine, the son of the more scholarly and thoughtful Richard Bertie, never excelled as a student and was to make his name as a soldier and man of action. But that time was to come later. Catherine would not live to hear the queen refer to her son as 'my good Peregrine', or to see him distinguish himself overseas in important military

posts. In his youth, Peregrine went through a rather wild period and caused his mother considerable anxiety. It was probably no more than the natural exuberance of a very high-spirited lad; there was nothing vicious about Peregrine Bertie, nothing bad. From all accounts he was a normal youth sowing a few wild oats, more interested in feats of physical prowess than in intellectual exercises. But Catherine would have had her son be perfect, and she worried about him. On June 29th, 1572, she wrote to William Cecil:

> I have great cause to think myself very much bounden to you ... So am I and my husband wholly at your commandment ... and now my good Lord, to perfect this work there rests no more but it will please you to give that young man my son some good counsel, to bridle his youth, and with all haste to dispatch him the Court, that he may go down to his father while I trust all is well ... From Willoughby House in the Barbican this present Sunday.[11]

When he was seventeen years old, there were plans afoot for Peregrine to marry Elizabeth Cavendish, the daughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury (Bess of Hardwick). What happened is not at all clear, but Peregrine did not marry her, and, on very short acquaintance and without the royal permission, Elizabeth Cavendish married the Earl of Lennox, brother of the Lord Darnley who had married Mary Queen of Scots and had been murdered in 1567. It seems pretty certain that the reason why Peregrine did not marry her was because he did not wish to marry her, and that the young girl, piqued by Peregrine's attitude, quickly salved her wounded pride with another, nobler, husband. The queen was outraged at not being consulted by the Countess of

Shrewsbury about her daughter's marriage, and, in an effort to mitigate the royal anger, the Earl of Shrewsbury wrote to the queen in 1574:

> I understand of late your Majesty's displeasure is sought against my wife, for the marriage of her daughter to Lady Lennox's son. I must confess to your Majesty, as true is, it was dealt in suddenly, without my knowledge, but as I dare undertake and insure to your Majesty. For my wife, finding her daughter disappointed of young Bertie where she hoped, and the other young gentleman was inclined to love with a few days' acquaintance, did her best to further her daughter to this match, without having therein any other intent or respect than with reverent duty towards your Majesty she ought.[12]

Not only was Peregrine Bertie not interested in marrying Elizabeth Cavendish; he was not in the least interested in having his marriage arranged for him. In this he was his mother's own son. It would be interesting to know exactly how much Catherine of Suffolk had to do with the matter. It was, of course, entirely out of character for her to have tried in any way to press a loveless match upon her son, and there is no indication that she did. In fact, there is no word from her, of pleasure or of disappointment, either at the prospect of the marriage or at its failure to come about. She did not even write to William Cecil about it, as she did so often when a problem arose which touched her deeply, as she did at great length and more than once when Peregrine actually did decide to marry. For her son's choice of a wife brought no happiness to his mother.

In the year 1577, when he was nearly twenty-two years old, Peregrine Bertie was deeply in love with Lady Mary

Vere, the daughter of the late sixteenth Earl of Oxford and sister of Edward Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who had married William Cecil's daughter Ann in 1571. Brilliant and charming, self-centred and cruel, Oxford had, by his selfishness and arrogance, brought great unhappiness to his young wife Ann, and to her father – a fact which was well known to the Duchess of Suffolk, as it was to most people. The duchess viewed with considerable apprehension the prospect of her son marrying Oxford's sister, a young woman who gave every indication of a difficult and unpleasant disposition which boded ill for a happy married life. But Peregrine was so much in love with Lady Mary that nothing, certainly no protest from his father or mother, could shake him. Catherine realized that fact, she realized also how hot-headed the young couple were, and she was very frightened lest they might marry in a hurry, without first getting the queen's approval of their match. On July 2nd she wrote to William Cecil about it.

> It is very true that my wise son has gone very far with my Lady Vere, I fear too far to turn. I must say to you in counsel what I have said to her plainly, that I had rather he had matched in any other place, and I told her the causes. Her friends made small account of me, her brother did what in him lay to deface my husband and my son; besides, our religions agree not, and I cannot tell what more. If she should prove like her brother, if an empire follows her I should be sorry to match so. She said that she could not rule her brother's tongue nor help the rest of his faults, but for herself she trusted so to use her as I should have no cause to mislike her. And seeing it was so far forth between my son and her, she

desired my good will and asked no more. 'That is a seemly thing,' quoth I, 'for you to live on; for I fear that Master Bertie will so mislike these dealings that he will give little more than his good will if he will give that. Besides, if her Majesty shall mislike of it, sure we turn him to the wide world.' She told me how Lord Sussex and Master Hatton had promised to speak for her to the Queen, and that I would require you to do the like. I told her her brother used you and your daughter so evil that I could not require you to deal in it. Well, if I would write she knew you would do it for my sake; and since there was no undoing it she trusted I would for my son's sake help now.[13]

It does not appear whether or not Lord Burghley put in a word with the queen in favour of the marriage. As Catherine had remarked in her letter, he had no reason to love anyone connected with the Earl of Oxford. But less than a fortnight later, on July 14th, the duchess wrote to him again, enclosing a letter from her husband indicating how troubled he was about his son's proposed marriage.

If he knew as much as I of Lord Oxford's dealings, it would trouble him more; but the case standing as it doth, I mean to keep it from him. I cannot express how much it grieveth me that my son in this weightiest matter hath so far forgotten himself to the trouble and disquiet of his friends. He is like enough to be his own undoing and the young lady's too, for if his wilfulness and uncourteous dealings should by any means come to my husband's ears, I believe he would make his son but a small marriage. I know not what to do therein. He cannot take it well at my hand that I should seek to bestow

> his son as it were against his will: and yet if her Majesty could be won to like of it, my husband would be the easier won to it if Lord Oxford's great uncourtesy do not too much trouble him.[14]

The duchess wrote from Willoughby House in London, where she had undoubtedly come in order to be near the young people. Her husband, 'so far off', was probably at Grimsthorpe. Neither one of them liked the idea of their son marrying Lady Mary, but Catherine was about ready to accept it as inevitable. She was reluctant to press her old friend to intervene any further with the Veres, who had treated him and his child so badly; she was so reluctant to do it that she could only hint, at the end of this letter, at the need to win the queen's approval. So much she could not resist doing. Peregrine, she was now certain, was going to marry Lady Mary Vere, with or without approval from his parents or his queen. Catherine was nearly beside herself with worry. If her son and Lady Mary were to marry without Elizabeth's knowledge and approval, it would almost inevitably end Peregrine's future as a servant of his queen. No one knew better than Catherine of Suffolk how angry Elizabeth Tudor could become when members of her Court married without her consent, and to what lengths the royal anger could go. Moreover, Lady Mary Vere was a maid of honour, and as such her marriage was in the gift of the Crown; if she were to defy this and marry without the queen's approval, both she and the man who married her would be ruined, nothing less. The duchess was on the horns of a cruel dilemma. She hated the whole business, but she knew beyond any doubt that her son's whole future was at stake, and the one person to whom she could turn for help in winning the queen to this

marriage which she herself so hated was the one man she could not bear to ask. And so, at fifty-eight years of age, Catherine of Suffolk was driven to hinting for Cecil's help. It was a hateful position for the proud and outspoken duchess, a position such as she had never been in before and one which she would have rejected now except to save her son. Peregrine was the only one of her sons who had lived to manhood – for him the duchess would do virtually anything.

William Cecil knew this; he knew how hard it must have been for Catherine to write to him as she did. What action he took in the matter is not recorded, but it is safe to guess that he intervened with the queen on behalf of Catherine's son and his chosen bride. The Earl of Oxford had separated from Ann Cecil, heaping insults upon her and upon her father, but Cecil was not one to let his own bitterness stand in the way of helping his old friend. In any case, Queen Elizabeth finally agreed to the marriage, and Peregrine Bertie and Lady Mary Vere were wed some time after the beginning of the year 1578.

Catherine's relations with her future daughter-in-law had become more amicable by the end of 1577, so much so that together they hatched up a scheme for improving the relations between Lady Mary's brother and his rejected wife, who, with their baby daughter (whom Oxford had refused even to see) was living at her father's home. From Willoughby House the duchess wrote to Lord Burghley on December 15th:

> ... on Thursday I went to see my Lady Mary Vere. After other talks, she asked me what I would say to it if my Lord her brother would take his wife again. 'Truly,'

quoth I, 'nothing would comfort me more, for now I wish to your brother as much good as to my own son.' 'Indeed,' quoth she, 'He would very fain see the child and is loth to send for her.' 'Then,' quoth I, 'And you will keep my counsel, we will have some sport with him. I will see if I can get the child hither to me, when you shall come hither, and whilst my Lord your brother is with you I will bring in the child as though it were some other of my friends' and we shall see how nature will work in him to like it, and tell him it is his own after.' 'Very well,' quoth she, 'we agree thereon.' ... I mean not to delay in it otherwise than it shall seem good to your Lordship and in that sort that may best like you. I will do what I can either in that or in anything else that may any way lay in me.[15]

The duchess had found something she might be able to do for her friend to repay, in some part, the great debt she felt she owed to him. Later on in the same day, Catherine was struck by the thought that Lady Mildred Cecil, Burghley's wife, might be reluctant to fall in with her plan, not wishing to risk losing her little granddaughter. On the heels of her first letter the duchess sent a second note to Lord Burghley.

After I had sealed my letter, I began to remember what grief it would be to my lady your wife to part with the child. But let her not fear that, for after he hath seen it it can not tarry here and though he would, for here is no apt lodging for her. And I doubt not after the first sight but he will be well enough content to come to her at her own home. But if I may counsel, in no way let him not be arrested in his desire.[16]

Unfortunately there is no record of whether the scheme was ever put into effect. Oxford and Ann were reconciled, but not until 1582, nearly five years later.

After their marriage, Peregrine and his bride went to live at Grimsthorpe, while Catherine and Richard Bertie stayed in London. They moved into a house in Hampstead, which at that time was not a part of the city but was country, and somewhat rolling country at that. Possibly the duchess and her husband took the house there when Catherine turned Grimsthorpe over to her son and his bride, because they found that they were missing the green fields and tall trees and the feeling of openness and space in Lincolnshire. Willoughby House stood in a closely built-up part of London, and Catherine, who was far from well, undoubtedly felt cramped and confined living there for any length of time. In spite, however, of the beautiful surroundings in which they started their life together, Peregrine's marriage to Lady Mary did not begin auspiciously. The bride's temper was a hot one, and perhaps Peregrine himself was none too patient. Also, it appears that they took no pains at all in the upkeep of Grimsthorpe. On March 12th, 1578, the duchess wrote a letter to Burghley on behalf of one Charles Chamberlain, a kinsman of hers who hoped for service under him; on behalf of 'one from Boston', who had money due to him for service in Ireland; and finally

> for a more unthankful person, in counsel may I say it, for my daughter Mary and her husband, who will in any wise use a house out of hand and I fear will so govern it as my husband and I shall have small comfort of it and less gain; for what disorders they make we must pay for it, but neither the young folk nor my husband so con-

> siders of it yet. That my Lady loves wine who knows her that knows not that ... and my son hates it not ... my suit therefore is if it shall not mislike you or that you may do it, to grant them ... impost for two tuns of wine to be taken at Hull or Boston, and I dare better be bound to you that it shall be all drunken quickly in their house than orderly or well spent.[17]

Catherine went on to ask Burghley to do this as promptly as he could, in order that the young people would stay longer in the country, 'if they outrage not too much so as we shall not be able to bide it.' This letter is revealing of Catherine's concern about the way her son and his wife were living, and of the fact that apparently she felt that they were drinking more than was good for them. It seems surprising that she asked Burghley to make the wine available to them, since obviously she did not approve of the way they would drink it, but perhaps she had faced the fact that they were going to do it anyway, and felt that on the whole it was better for them to stay in the country than to come back to town, which they might well do if they could not get what they wanted at Grimsthorpe.

The situation was no better late in September. Thomas Cecil, Lord Burghley's eldest son, wrote to his father on the 25th:

> My wife and I have of late made a little progress into Lincolnshire ... Thus being on my way from Grantham to my Lady of Suffolk's which I take in my way homewards ... as touching such disagreements as have fallen out there ... this far I understand, that my Lady of Suffolk's coming down from London was to appease certain unkindnesses grown between her son and his

wife. More particularly as yet I cannot write at this time, but I think my Lady Mary will be beaten with that rod which heretofore she prepared for others.[18]

Catherine of Suffolk was miserable about the whole business. She was quite ill in the autumn of 1579, ill in body and in great pain, but also in such anguish of mind over her son's troubles that it caused concern to members of her household, some of whom appear to have commented upon her mental state. On September 23rd she wrote to Lord Burghley that she was very much upset at discovering that he had been given the impression that she was 'senseless'.

I beseech you my good Lord not to think, though I be sickly that I am altogether senseless as my foolish footman hath given your Lordship rather to think. I assure you, since yesternight that my daughter [Susan] came from London and told it me, I have not been quiet, as this bearer can tell whom I have dispatched so soon as my extremity would suffer me to write this letter. And where it pleaseth you of your goodness to consider of any by his foolish talk ... I beseech your Lordship for God's sake there may be no more words of it ... Craving your pardon both for my foolish man and myself ... at Hampstead, in pain of body as this bearer can tell.

But whatever I am in weakness of body, Your Lordship's very assuredly till it will please God to call me.[19]

There was nothing wrong with Catherine's mind. But she was all but distraught over her son's unhappiness. Moreover, she could see nothing whatever that she could do to help in the situation, a fact which only increased her worry and

misery. Obviously Lady Mary was behaving very badly, and obviously part of her bad behaviour was directed at Peregrine's mother. In March of 1580, the duchess wrote a letter to the Earl of Leicester.

> I am very sorry that it is my evil fortune to be troublesome to any of my friends, especially being brought to the same by the evil hap of my dear son's marriage ... now I hear by some of my friends [she] hath in these few days shown such a letter of mine as doth show how near I came to lose my head if she had not by good hap escaped some dangers, as it seemeth, wrought to her by me. What they were I know not. But it shall please her Majesty to be so much my gracious lady, to appoint any to examine me of any doings towards her. I trust they shall find no likelihood in me of losing my head, nay, nor wrong in writing of my sharp letter, all circumstances considered ...[20]

Catherine probably wrote that particular letter to Leicester thinking that he, being the queen's favourite, could do more than anyone to counteract in Elizabeth's mind the sort of malicious stories her daughter-in-law was circulating about her. A month later, however, she had stood inaction just as long as she could. Her son's problem was so acute that she felt that something must be done, and that she must take a hand in getting it done. In April of 1580, on Easter Monday, she wrote to Lord Burghley once more.

> I am ashamed to be so troublesome to your Lordship and others of my good Lords of her Majesty's honourable council, specially in so uncomfortable a suit as for

license of their assent of the absence of my only dear son, in whose company I hoped with comfort to have finished my last days. But ... either I must see his doleful pining and vexed mind at home, which hath brought him to such a state of mind and body as so many knoweth and can witness it, or else content myself with his desire to seek such fortune abroad as may make him forget some griefs and give him better knowledge and experience to serve her Majesty and his country at his return. The time he desireth for the same is five years, so as I am never like after his departure to see him again; yet am I loath he should so long be out of her Majesty's realm wherefore I cannot consent to any more than three years. Oh, my good Lord, you have children and therefore you know how dear they be to their parents, your wisdom also is some help to govern your fatherly affections by ... but alas, I a poor woman which with great pains and travail many years hath by God's mercy brought an only son from tender youth to man's state ... so hoping now to have reaped some comfort for my long pains ... in place of comfort I myself must be the suitor for his absence, to my great grief and sorrow. But God's will be fulfilled, who worketh all for the best to them that love and fear Him; wherefore were not that hope of Him thoroughly settled in me, I think my very heart would burst for sorrow. I understand my sharp letters be everywhere showed, but were the bitter causes that moved them as well opened and known, I am sure my very enemies ... would not only pity me and my husband's wrongs but both my children's ... I most humbly beseech her Majesty even for God's sake therefore to give him leave to go to sea and live in all places

> where it shall please God to hold him, always with the duty of a faithful subject to serve ... her Majesty ...[21]

That heartbroken letter is the last one from the duchess that has been preserved. It is a pitiful letter, and yet, in spite of her overwhelming grief which had almost beaten her down, Catherine's faith in the love of her God was as strong as ever it had been. Not even this bitter sorrow and disillusionment, which had come to her when she was no longer young, no longer strong, could shake her abiding faith.

Peregrine did not go overseas in 1580; he did not go until 1582, and by that time he and Lady Mary had resolved their problems, and Lady Mary had settled down to be a loyal and loving wife. It was very sad that the first years of their marriage were such unhappy ones, tragic that during Catherine's life her daughter-in-law caused her only heartbreak and worry. The duchess was a devoted mother; she loved her children dearly and their welfare was her greatest concern. In the afternoon of her life she would have been completely contented if she could only have seen her two children living happy, useful lives, raising their families, bringing her grandchildren to see her. Such happiness was no more than Catherine of Suffolk deserved. But it was not to be. Her daughter, Susan, had been saddened by the loss of her husband, Reginald Grey, soon after his elevation to the peerage, and this loss was a personal grief to the duchess too; and while Susan made a second, happy, marriage with Sir John Wingfield, that did not come until later, in 1582. Peregrine and Lady Mary had six children, the eldest one born in 1582. And they named their youngest child, their only daughter, Catherine, after Peregrine's mother. Lady

Mary had overcome her antagonism towards her mother-in-law. But the duchess did not live to see the change in Lady Mary. She never saw any of her grandchildren, nor did she see the ultimate happiness of her own children.

XI

ENDINGS

On September 19th, 1580, Catherine of Suffolk died. It was almost exactly forty-seven years since the day when she had stood at Charles Brandon's side to become the Duchess of Suffolk. Her life since that day in her far-off girlhood had been a full one, full of laughter and tears, of serenity and adventure, security and danger. Whatever had happened to her, she had always been a personage, a great lady. While her life did not alter the course of empire, did not influence kings or statesmen, she played, directly or indirectly, a part of considerable consequence in the development of Protestantism in England. Great figures in the Reformation, Hugh Latimer, Martin Bucer, John à Lasco, all owed much to her, all at some time were helped and stimulated by her generosity and encouragement.

There were women rulers in Europe during Catherine's life, Mary and Elizabeth in England, Mary in Scotland, Catherine de Médicis in France; there were learned women, 'blue-stockings' — the Cooke sisters, Mildred who married William Cecil and her equally erudite sisters; and there was the ill-fated, scholarly little Lady Jane Grey. Except for such women as these, however, the females of Catherine's day were retiring and quiet people, perhaps beautiful and charming, but quite simply shadowy backgrounds for their husbands, and their sole purpose in life was to run their homes, to bear and rear their children and to keep themselves in the

background. Catherine of Suffolk was quite different from any of these women. She was not royalty, she was not a blue-stocking; and she was never a shadow of anyone, man or woman. Her education had been as good but no better than that of the average girl-child of the gentry, and after her childhood she had not pursued scholarship. But she was intelligent and thoughtful, fearless and outspoken, and she was devout and sure in her belief and tireless in her zeal. She worked hard and lovingly among the country folk of her home county of Lincoln, to bring to them the message of the reformed religion, to make certain that the Gospel was preached to them in words which they could understand, that the Word of God, the Bible, was available to them in the English language. A sixteenth-century writer referred to her as 'that devout woman of God', and one writing in the twentieth century called her 'almost the mother of English Puritanism'.

She was married twice, both times quite happily, and she was a good wife and mother. Probably she was fortunate in that both of her husbands were proud, not only of her beauty and wit, of her devotion to them and her success as the mistress of their homes, but also of her independence of mind, her individuality and the fact that she was never just their shadow, but a vital, forceful personality herself. Men in the sixteenth century did not always want these qualities in their wives; both the Duke of Suffolk and Richard Bertie accepted them with pride and satisfaction.

She was singularly modern in the midst of the sixteenth century, modern in her quiet assumption that in addition to home-making and caring for her children a woman could and should make a contribution to the spiritual well-being of the people, in her courage and outspokenness, and, above all,

modern in her refusal to accept beliefs and customs simply because they had always been accepted.

She died quietly, either in London or at Grimsthorpe (one hopes it was the latter, but one cannot be certain), and she was buried in the church in Spilsby in Lincolnshire, north-east of Grimsthorpe, near Tattershall and close by her own manor of Eresby. Eighteen months later her husband died and was buried beside her. An impressive monument was raised in their memory in the lovely fourteenth-century church where they lie with the breezes from the North Sea blowing freshly about as they blew over the gardens in Suffolk, not so many miles to the south, in the days when little Catherine Willoughby played there. One may go to the church and look at the stone effigies of Catherine and Richard Bertie, and read that this is the tomb of 'Ricardi Bertie et Catherinae Ducissae Suffolkiae, Baronissae de Willoby et Eresby'. But the most vital memorials of Catherine of Suffolk are her letters to William Cecil, explaining her refusal to make an important but loveless match for her first-born son; her letter after her boys' death, reaffirming her faith in God; the edition of Latimer's Sermons, dedicated to her 'valiant spirit'; and, above all, the love and gratitude of the country people to whom she had made God and His love accessible and understandable and real. She lived in the sixteenth century, and the events of that century dictated her life, but they could never circumscribe it. Her beauty of mind and body, her charm and wit, and her spiritual integrity and fearlessness were not merely characteristics of the sixteenth century: they were eternal.

NOTES

In writing this book, I have drawn upon manuscript material in the Public Record Office (P.R.O.), in the British Museum (B.M.) and in private manuscript collections, the Salisbury MSS at Hatfield House and the Ancaster MSS deposited in the Lincolnshire Archives Office; also upon contemporary chroniclers. Descriptions are based upon first-hand observations, in Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Germany, checked against historical descriptions. The following notes are for the purpose of identifying particular references; I have kept them to a minimum, feeling that copious notes are out of place in this book.

CHAPTER I (pages 21-32)

1 B.M., Stowe MSS, 656, fol. 7b ff.
2 *Cal. L. & P. Henry VIII*, vol. IV, pt 3, no. 5508.

CHAPTER II (pages 33-49)

1 The story about the burial of Maria de Salinas is set forth in Lady Cecilie Goff, *Woman of the Tudor Age* (London, 1930). I have in my possession letters from the Rev. Canon James L. Cartwright, librarian and archivist of Peterborough Cathedral, saying that the story cannot be supported, that the leaden coffin within the grave was not opened and the body was not discovered.

CHAPTER III (pages 50-63)

1 Thomas Fuller, *Church History of Britain*, vol. IV, p. 235.
2 John Strype, *Annals*, vol. II, pt ii, p. 347.
3 Ibid., p. 496. I am indebted to Professor Kenneth Setton of the University of Pennsylvania for translating the verse.
4 On Hugh Latimer, cf. his *Sermons*; also Allan G. Chester, *Hugh Latimer* (Philadelphia, 1954).

CHAPTER IV (pages 64-78)

1 P.R.O., S.P. 10-8-35. (Unpublished Crown copyright material in the Public Record Office is reproduced by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.)
2 Ibid., 10-10-39 (printed in P. F. Tytler, *England under the reigns of Edward VI and Mary* (1839), vol. I, p. 323).
3 Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, vol. II, pt. ii, p. 130.
4 P.R.O., S.P. 10-10-2.
5 Ibid., 10-10-6.

CHAPTER V (pages 79-96)

1 H.M.C., *Cal. Ancaster MSS*, p. 457.
2 I am indebted to Professor Albert J. Schmidt for drawing my attention to this reference.
3 P.R.O., S.P. 10-13-54.
4 Ibid., S.P. 10-14-47. An interesting thing about this letter is its reference to Latimer's *niece*. The word is transcribed almost everywhere as *wife*. Allan Chester, in *Hugh Latimer*, has it *niece*. I have examined the manuscript with great care, as has Mr Noel Blakiston of

the P.R.O. The word is clearly *nesse* (i.e., niece) and probably refers to Mary Glover, Latimer's favourite niece, with whom he made his home much of the time. Latimer, of course, was never married.

[5] Conyers Read, *The Tudors* (New York, 1936), p. 122.

CHAPTER VI (pages 97–109)

[1] Parker Society, *Ridley Letters* (1841), p. 382.

[2] The account of Gardiner's questioning of Richard Bertie, and of the Berties' flight, is set forth in Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (4th edition, ed. Josiah Pratt), vol. VIII, pp. 569 ff.

[3] Lady Georgina Bertie, *Five Generations of a Loyal House* (1845), pt i, p. 23, n. 2.

CHAPTER VII (pages 110–29)

[1] Foxe spells the name Santon, today it is spelled Xanten; it is derived from the Latin *sanctus*.

[2] 'Narrative of the Pursuit of English Refugees in Germany under Queen Mary', *Royal Hist. Soc. Trans.*, new ser., vol. XI, p. 113.

[3] Lady G. Bertie, *Five Generations of a Loyal House*, Appendix U.

[4] Lady C. Goff, *Woman of the Tudor Age*, p. 240.

CHAPTER VIII (pages 130–46)

[1] P.R.O., S.P. 12-2-10.

[2] Ibid., 12-3-9.

[3] H. Gee, *Elizabethan Prayer Book* (1902), p. 210.

[4] *Cal. Pat. Rolls, Eliz.*, vol. I, p. 25.

[5] P.R.O., S.P. 12-6-2.

[6] Ibid., 12-43-40.

CHAPTER IX (pages 147–66)

[1] Lincolnshire Archives Office, Ancaster MSS, vii/A/2.

[2] Lady Goff, *Woman of the Tudor Age*, p. 262, says that Lady Elinor was Elinor Clifford, but Miss Strickland, *Lives of the Tudor Princesses* (1868), p. 296, says that Elinor Clifford died in 1547.

[3] This may mean rustic, i.e., country, wagon, or it may, as the *Cal. Ancaster MSS* (p. 472) suggests, mean 'rush' wagon.

[4] Lincolnshire Archives Office, Ancaster MSS, vii/A/5.

[5] Ibid.

CHAPTER X (pages 167–92)

[1] B.M., Lansdowne MSS, 35, no. 90.

[2] Lincolnshire Archives Office, Ancaster MSS, v/B/4.

[3] B.M., Add. MSS, 48043, fol. 1–9.

[4] *H.M.C., Cal. Salisbury MSS*, vol. I, p. 477.

[5] Ibid., p. 482.

[6] P.R.O., S.P. 12-77-52.

[7] Ibid., 12-77-63.

[8] Ibid., 12-78-18.

[9] Ibid., 12-78-42.

[10] Cambridge Univ. Library, MS. Ee. 11.34. fol. 72v. I am indebted to Sir John Neale for calling my attention to this reference.

[11] B.M., Lansdowne MSS, 28, no. 62. The letter is misdated, 1579, in the catalogue. The last figure is somewhat obscure; it is possible to read it as either a 9 or a 2, but in 1579 the 29th June, the date of the endorsement, was a Wednesday, whereas in 1572 it was a Sunday, which fits the letter. Moreover, in 1579 the letter would not make sense, since Peregrine Bertie was married in 1578.

[12] Goff, *Woman of the Tudor Age*, p. 307.

[13] *Cal. Salisbury MSS*, vol. XIII, p. 146.

[14] Hatfield House, Salisbury MSS, 160/135.

[15] B.M., Lansdowne MSS, 25, no. 27.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Hatfield House, Salisbury MSS, 160/119.

[18] *Cal. Salisbury MSS*, vol. II, p. 205.

[19] B.M., Lansdowne MSS, 28, no. 65.

[20] Goff, op. cit., p. 315.

[21] B.M., Lansdowne MSS, 25, no. 39.

INDEX

INDEX

À Lasco, John, 122, 193
Anne of Cleves, 45

Bertie, Catherine, *see* Catherine Duchess of Suffolk
Bertie, Peregrine, birth, 119; 128, 178ff; marriage, 184
Bertie, Richard, second husband of Catherine of Suffolk, 89-91; marriage to Catherine, 92; 98ff; exile, chap. vii *passim*; master at Grimsthorpe, chap. ix *passim*; public service, 167-8; answer to Knox, *First Blast of the Trumpet*, 170; 177, 195
Bertie, Susan, daughter of Catherine and Richard Bertie, birth, 95; 104, 171, 173, 191
Bertie, Thomas, father of Richard Bertie, 90
Bilney, Thomas, 54-6
Boleyn, Anne, 31, 36
Bomelius, Henry, pastor of St Willebrod's church in Wesel, 119
Brandon, Charles Duke of Suffolk, 17, 25; marriage to French Queen, 26; marriage to Catherine Willoughby, 32; 38-9, 42, 46; death, 48
Brandon, Charles, son of Duke of Suffolk and the French Queen, 17, 33-4
Brandon, Charles, younger son of Catherine and Duke of Suffolk, 42, 63, 65, 79ff; death, 83
Brandon, Eleanor, 17, 29, 49
Brandon, Frances, 17, 29, 31, 40, 49, 86, 95; death, 140
Brandon, Henry, eldest son of Catherine and Charles Brandon, 41, 63, 65, 79ff; death, 83
Bucer, Martin, 81-2, 121, 193

Catherine of Aragon, 21-3, 30; divorced, 36; 38-9; death, 40
Catherine Duchess of Suffolk, 17; birth, 21; early childhood, 24; ward of Charles Brandon, 25, 28-30; first marriage, 32; birth of sons, 41-2; charm and grace, 43, 66; meets Anne of Cleves, 45; at King's marriage to Catherine Parr, 48; wit, 43, 50, 102; character, 50; Protestant leanings, 51; meeting with Hugh Latimer, 38, 57; influence of Latimer, 53, 56-7, 91, 97; Gardiner's antipathy towards her, 58, 96, 97ff; speculations about her remarriage, 61; life at Grimsthorpe, 64, 147ff; belief and work for Protestantism, 66-7; 73, 75, 147; friendship with William Cecil, 68, 75, 79, 85, 87, 131, 143, 148, 153, 171, 175, 179, 181, 184-6, 188, 189-91; zeal and impatience with caution, 69, 131-8, 168; friendship for Somerset, 70, 75; for Warwick, 75; guardian of Catherine Parr's infant, 71-3; attitude towards son Henry's marriage, 76-7; move to Kingston, 81; friendship with Martin Bucer, 81-2, 121; death of sons, 83-4; considering remarriage, 89; marriage to Richard Bertie, 92; birth of daughter, 95; flight and exile, 105-39; birth of son Peregrine, 119; return to England, 139; relations with Catherine and Mary Grey, 140-6; household at Grimsthorpe, chap. ix *passim*; relations with Queen Elizabeth, 168-9, 174; efforts to get title for Reginald Grey, 171ff; for Richard Bertie, 172ff; worry about Peregrine, 178ff; ill health, 172, 174, 188; death, 193
Catherine Howard, 46-8
Catherine Parr, 48, 59; religious pamphlet, 69; death 71
Cecil, Lady Mildred, wife of William Cecil, 133, 185, 193
Cecil, Thomas, 141, 187
Cecil, William, Lord Burghley, friend of Catherine of Suffolk, 68; character, 68-9, 130-1; efforts to dispel enmity between Somerset and Warwick, 75; letters to, from Catherine of Suffolk, 72, 74, 75, 76-7, 85, 88, 133, 143, 173, 174, 175, 179, 181, 182, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189; mentioned, 79, 136, 143, 148, 153, 167, 170, 177, 193
Chapuys, Eustace, ambassador from Emperor Charles V, 33, 39, 61
Charles V, emperor, 33, 102

Cranmer, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, 37, 42, 70, 97, 102, 122
Cromwell, Thomas, 45

DORSET, MARQUESS OF, *see* Grey, Henry
Dudley, Lord Guildford, 93-4
Dudley, John, Earl of Warwick, Duke of Northumberland, 43, 59, 74ff, 78
Dudley, Robert, Earl of Leicester, 189

EDWARD VI, 42, 63, 66, 70, 93; death, 94
Elizabeth, Queen of England, 36, 42-3, 68, 129; accession, 130; 136, 139, 140, 143, 145, 157; relations with Catherine of Suffolk, 168; 173, 175, 183
Erasmus, Desiderius, New Testament, 54; 122
Erbagh, Earl of, 126

FRANCIS I, KING OF FRANCE, 26

GARDINER, STEPHEN, 22, 61, 62, 96, 97; moves against Catherine of Suffolk, 98ff
Grey, Henry, Marquess of Dorset, Duke of Suffolk, 31, 86, 93-4
Grey, Lady Jane, 87, 93-6, 140
Grey, Lady Katherine, 140-2
Grey, Lady Mary, 140, 142-6
Grey, Reginald, husband of Susan Bertie, 171ff; death, 177
Grimsthorpe, Lincolnshire, 22, 41, 46-7, 54, 64-5, 85, 87, 139; chap. ix *passim*; 186

HENRY VII, 25
Henry VIII, 21-3, 25, 30-1, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44-9, 56, 60-2; death, 63
Hertford, Earl of, *see* Seymour, Edward
Howard, Thomas, 3rd Duke of Norfolk, 42, 94, 96

KET'S REBELLION, 73
KNOX, John, 51, 170

LATIMER, HUGH, 37-8, 53-8, 74, 89-92, 97, 102, 140, 193
Leicester, Earl of, *see* Dudley, Robert
Lisle, Lord, *see* Dudley, John
Louis XII, King of France, 17, 26

MARY, infant daughter of Catherine Parr and Thomas Seymour, 71-3
Mary, Queen of England, 22-3, 36, 43, 57, 59, 93-6, 99, 102, 130, 136
Mary, the French Queen, sister of Henry VIII, 17-19; marriage to Duke of Suffolk, 26; character, 28; 30; death, 18, 32; 65
Mason, Sir John, ambassador from Queen Mary to Netherlands, 120

NORFOLK, DUKE OF, *see* Howard, Thomas
Northampton, Marquess of, *see* Parr, William
Northumberland, Duke of, *see* Dudley, John

OTTO HEINRICH, Prince Palatine, 121
Oxford, Earl of, *see* Vere, Edward

PARHAM OLD HALL, Suffolk, 21, 24, 28, 170
Parkhurst, John, chaplain to Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, 51; verse eulogizing duchess, 52
Parr, William, Marquess of Northampton, 62, 69, 72
Perrault, Antoine de, Bishop of Arras and dean of minster at Santon, 112
Perusell, Master Francis, pastor of congregation in Wesel, 111, 112, 117
Pilgrimage of Grace, 41
Poland, 61, 122-3, 127-8

RADZIWELL, NICHOLAS, Count Palatine of Vilna, 122, 127
Ridley, Nicholas, 97, 102

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, 79, 81
Salinas, Maria de, mother of Catherine Duchess of Suffolk, 18, 21, 30, 39, 40; death, 44; burial, 44, 197
Santon, town in Duchy of Cleves, 111-12
Seton, Alexander, chaplain to Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, 51
Seymour, Edward, 1st Earl of Hertford, Duke of Somerset, 62, 63, 70, 73-8
Seymour, Jane, 42
Seymour, Thomas, Baron Seymour of Sudeley, 71
Sigismund II, King of Poland, 61, 122, 127
Somerset, Duke of, *see* Seymour, Edward
Spilsby, Lincolnshire, burial place of Catherine and Richard Bertie, 195
Suffolk, Duchess of, *see* Mary, the French Queen
Suffolk, Duke of, *see* Brandon, Charles; Grey, Henry
Sweating sickness, 82-4

VAN DER DELFT, FRANÇOIS, ambassador from Emperor Charles V, 59

Vere, Edward, 17th Earl of Oxford, 181-2, 184, 186
Vere, Lady Mary, 180-92

WARWICK, EARL OF, *see* Dudley, John
Weinheim, in Palatinate, 121
Wesel, Hansa town in Duchy of Cleves, 111, 114-20
Westhorpe, Suffolk, 17, 28-31
Willoughby, Lady, *see* Salinas, Maria de
Willoughby, Catherine, *see* Catherine Duchess of Suffolk
Willoughby, Sir Christopher, 24, 170
Willoughby, William Lord, 21-2; death, 24
Wilson, Dr Thomas, tutor to Henry and Charles Brandon at Cambridge, 79
Wingfield, Sir John, second husband of Susan Bertie, 177, 191
Wolsey, Thomas Cardinal, 23
Wriothesley, Sir Thomas, 61, 62, 91, 99

A NOTE ON THE TYPE

THE TEXT of this book has been set on the Monotype in a type face named Bembo. The roman is a copy of a letter cut for the celebrated Venetian printer Aldus Manutius by Francesco Griffo, and first used in Cardinal Bembo's *De Aetna* of 1495—hence the name of the revival. Griffo's type is now generally recognized, thanks to the researches of Mr. Stanley Morison, to be the first of the old face group of types. The companion italic is an adaptation of a chancery script type designed by the Roman calligrapher and printer Lodovico degli Arrighi, called Vincentino, and used by him during the 1520's.

A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EVELYN READ *is the wife of the late Conyers Read, the distinguished Tudor historian. Born in Philadelphia in 1901, Mrs. Read attended the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr and later Sweet Briar College in Virginia. With Mr. Read, she edited* ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND, *a contemporary account by John Clapham, for publication in 1951. While her husband was writing his highly acclaimed two-volume life of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Mrs. Read became interested in Catherine of Suffolk, who was a cherished friend of Burghley's. She stayed where the Duchess had stayed, followed her footsteps to Germany, where Catherine lived as an exile, and slept in her bedroom at Grimsthorpe, which is still inhabited by her lineal descendants. Though she has written many articles and pamphlets and did research for many of her husband's books,* MY LADY SUFFOLK *is her first full-length book. Mrs. Read lives in Villanova, Pennsylvania.*

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